

Patten, Lamont attack Heseltine plans

Thatcher camp expecting first round victory

By ROBIN OAKLEY AND PHILIP WEBSTER

MARGARET Thatcher's campaign team ended the first day of the Tory leadership contest confident that she had the votes to win on the first ballot next Tuesday.

Cabinet ministers rallied behind her. The environment secretary, Chris Patten, criticised Michael Heseltine's plans for reforming the poll tax; Norman Lamont, chief secretary to the Treasury, strongly endorsed her approach to Europe.

But the Heseltine camp was taking heart from opinion polls indicating that Labour's lead would be cut sharply if he were to become Conservative leader.

Mrs Thatcher, cool and outwardly confident, said at her last Commons question time before the poll: "After three general election victories, leading the only party with clear policies resolutely carried out, I intend to continue." She smiled when Labour left wing Dennis Skinner shouted over complaints of noise in the Commons: "All this will change under Heseltine", and said that she would be back next Wednesday with

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a report on the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe meeting in Paris.

When the Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, pointed out that she had said in an interview five years ago this week that she would retire in five years' time for some one else to carry the Conservative torch, she replied that the 1985 interview had not been in the forefront of her mind at present.

Question time also gave Neil Kinnock his first opportunity to challenge Mrs Thatcher on the points raised in Sir Geoffrey Howe's resignation speech on Tuesday. But she avoided a direct answer when he asked her to confirm that she had agreed to the Madrid conditions for Britain's entry to the European exchange-rate mechanism last year only because Nigel Lawson and Sir Geoffrey had threatened to quit.

The leadership tussle, for which nominations closed at noon with Mrs Thatcher and Mr Heseltine the only candidates, dominated prime minister's questions. Teddy Taylor (South East) gave Mrs Thatcher the chance to criticise Mr Heseltine's pledge of a poll tax review, with education spending possibly taken over by central government. Mr Taylor said that local education authorities in Britain had spent £16.6 billion last year. "If the share carried by the poll tax was transferred to national taxation, this would mean an increase in income tax of 20 per cent, or more than 5p in the pound." The prime minister replied: "If all education costs were transferred to central government and the grant still left with local government, it would mean a huge increase in income tax or a substantial reduction in monies available for other services such as health, pensions, defence and law and order. Either you get a big increase in income tax or substantial reductions in public expenditure."

Asked by the Labour MP Alistair Darling if she thought the poll tax was capable of overhaul, the prime minister

replied the government had already carried out a review, but the effects would not be seen until next year. This line had been agreed at a cabinet meeting earlier when the implications of Mr Heseltine's suggestions were discussed.

Some swift footwork was required yesterday from Mr Patten and the education secretary, Kenneth Clarke, who had commented on Wednesday that poll tax difficulties had still to be sorted out in a further review. That appeared to go against government policy because the environment department review resulted in July in a £3 billion package to cushion the impact.

Interviewed on BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*, Mr Patten said that the review was over but added: "We are always prepared to look at any new proposals that anyone might have for further improving the system of local government finance."

A concerted effort will be made by the Thatcher camp to suggest that while Mr Heseltine is a charismatic politician good on the broad sweep of ideas, he does not have Mrs Thatcher's capacity for detail. They are brushing aside the poll evidence that a Heseltine leadership would have a dramatic impact on the economy.

Continued on page 24, col 1

Challenger's wife shuns ambition

ANNE Heseltine says in an interview with *The Times* today that she is "not political" and tends to feel "like a spare thumb when I just trail along as the wife".

She says her husband "definitely" made the decision to run against Margaret Thatcher for the leadership only on Tuesday night, after Sir Geoffrey Howe's resignation speech, which Mrs Heseltine

heard in her car. "Goodness, I nearly drove off the road. Geoffrey is usually such a polite man."

Mrs Heseltine says the family is relieved to have the candidacy out in the open. "Now, even if there's a bit of mud flying over the next week or so, I dare say the admiral will float us all through it."

"As far as Michael's career is concerned", she says, "I don't want it for myself, not at all. Some Westminster wives do, terribly, and get angry and frustrated when their husbands fail or resign. I don't."

"When he came home after [resigning from the cabinet over] Westland I was sad for him, because he minded a lot, but not for the rest of us."

A colleague who works on an appeal run by Mrs Heseltine says that working with her is like handling an extremely good, well-bred horse: "You suggest something to her as a possibility, and suddenly she's jumped at it."



Mrs Heseltine: decision made on Tuesday night

Interview, page 20

Runcie says war could be just

By RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS REPORTER

A GULF war could be the lesser of two evils, Dr Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, said in his presidential address to the General Synod of the Church of England yesterday.

Although he urged that sanctions against Iraq be given at least a year to take effect, he did not rule out the use of force in the last resort. He also said that the country must face the "bleak, horrible fact" that casualties from such action would include civilians.

"Despite all the horrors and misery that war would certainly involve, we have to face the facts that it could be the lesser of two evils. We are not yet in that position because the sanctions have not had enough time to work their full effect, but we could reach that position if, for whatever reason, it became clear that the sanctions were not going to work," Dr Runcie said.

"Of one thing I am quite sure: while we must use every means short of war to enforce the UN policy, it would be foolish to rule out the use of force in the last resort."

In an oblique attack on Margaret Thatcher, the prime minister, Dr Runcie criticised proposals for war tribunals to bring President Saddam Hussein of Iraq to book. "I am bound to say that threats of war crimes tribunals can only be a disincentive to Iraqi withdrawal," he said.

Dr Runcie, awarded the Military Cross in the second world war, added: "We must set aside romantic ideas of a surgical strike... We must face the bleak, horrible fact that a war could not be confined to the professional soldiers, airmen and sailors."

The archbishop was given a

standing ovation but his remarks were later condemned by Bob Cryer, the Labour MP and leader of the parliamentary CND group, who said the archbishop should demonstrate his support for a just war "by being on the front line."

The Gulf Support Group said Dr Runcie's speech was "totally and utterly in line with our feelings that it is a horrific crisis that no one has yet been able to resolve."

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More than 1.7 million jobless

MORE than 1.7 million people are now unemployed, and Michael Howard, the employment secretary, admitted that dole queues were likely to lengthen in the run-up to Christmas.

The number of jobless rose by 32,200 to 1,702,700 in October, the biggest monthly rise since March 1986. The annual increase in average earnings went up to 10.25 per cent in the year to September, 0.25 per cent higher than the revised rate for the previous month.

Mr Howard described the figures as "disappointing". He said unemployment may continue to rise in the months immediately ahead, but that job prospects would improve with a resumption of growth.

Full report, page 25

New human rights charter

By ANDREW MCEWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE declaration to be signed by 34 nations at a summit on Wednesday in Paris to mark the end of the Cold War will include a charter of human rights proposed by Margaret Thatcher.

If Mrs Thatcher is still prime minister her signature will appear on the document along with those of Presidents Bush and Gorbachev and the leaders of Canada and every European nation except Albania.

What will happen if she loses the leadership vote on Tuesday is unclear, but she

will already have addressed the meeting on Monday. The declaration by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe will lay the basis for a new East-West relationship, including improved standards on human rights.

In a speech at Aspen in August Mrs Thatcher proposed that it should include a "Magna Carta" of rights has been taken up. The title has not been settled but is likely to include the word "charter".

Under the heading: "Human rights, democracy and the rule of law" it sets out

basic principles which go beyond previous declarations. The Conference began its attempts to set common standards with the Helsinki Final Declaration of 1975, and has subsequently continued to make improvements.

The new section includes the passage: "Everyone also has the right to know and act upon his rights, to participate in free and fair elections, to own property alone or in association and to exercise individual enterprise."

Deal ready, page 10

Sir Ralph leaves Burton without going for one

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

SIR Ralph Halpern has left the Burton Group with a pension of £456,000 a year for life and a £2 million golden handshake, which should help to keep him in the style to which he has accustomed himself, although his friends believe he is disappointed. "He was looking for a lot more," one said.

Sir Ralph, aged 52, was once Britain's highest-paid businessman at £1.3 million. His departure coincides with a 39 per cent fall in Burton's pre-tax profits to £133 million. Sir John Hoskyns, who replaces Sir Ralph as chairman of the group, said that his predecessor's departure was by mutual consent.

Outside his Nash house in Hanover Terrace, overlooking Regent's Park, Sir Ralph said yesterday that he had not yet made any long-term plans, but intended to take a holiday. He may not wish to

retain the three personal bodyguards, who were paid for by Burton but he will doubtless continue to enjoy his personal version of the good life.

Friends say he likes to be fashionable and to keep up appearances. His house is beautifully furnished with antiques and classical paintings. It also sports an electric organ with a microphone which allows him to sing along as he plays (he can, indeed, occasionally be persuaded to sing for his guests). There is a gym where he can indulge his passion for health and fitness: his Burton office was decorated with dishes of "energising" crystals brought from America.

Sir Ralph also has a large country property at Horsell, Surrey. But his main passion is exotic cars. His company car at one time was an Aston Martin, and he owned several at the same time.

Sir Ralph attended St Christopher

School, Leitchworth, his parents having fled Austria in the late 1930s and settled in north London. He had been with the Burton group for 30 years, building up chains such as Top Shop, Dorothy Perkins and Principles from the once struggling business. In 1985 he bought Debenhams for £550 million.

The City, however, disliked his theatrical approach, and his private life eventually made tabloid headlines over an affair with a model. One friend said: "The Fiona Wright affair on its own would not have damaged Ralph. No one thought any less of him because of it. It blew the possibility of a peerage out of the water, that was all. But in conjunction with controversy over his salary, his image was affected. It didn't help that he was not public school."

Company report, page 25
Comment, page 27

Britain sets up a £20m fund for Moscow

By ANDREW MCEWEN AND MARY DEJEVSKY

IN AN important policy shift, Britain yesterday dropped its refusal to aid the Soviet Union and announced a £20 million fund to help transfer British skills and expertise.

It is not, however, likely to take part in contingency plans which Washington is drawing up to send emergency food supplies to the Soviet Union this winter if needed.

The British and US moves came amid further evidence of problems in the Soviet economy. Moscow city council postponed a decision on food rationing amid disagreement over whether it would help or hinder supplies.

The Russian Federation and the central Soviet government were in dispute over the government's decision to free prices of designated luxury goods, while Muscovites began queuing at dawn hoping that goods not previously available in state shops would be offered for sale.

Although small in relation to Moscow's problems, the British fund sets a precedent. Until now London's view has been that spending money on Soviet problems would be like pouring money into a hole.

Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, announced the move in a speech to a group of schools in Oxford. He said that the government had decided to establish a Know-How Fund for the Soviet Union, separate from the existing Know-How Fund for Eastern Europe, whose funding was increased from £15 to £30 million in the Chancellor's autumn statement.

The Soviet fund will be spent over two years, but he described the £20 million as "an initial sum", implying that there will be more later. It will be used in four sectors: food distribution and agriculture, the energy industry, formation of small businesses and financial services. The aim will be to help Soviet managers and professionals to acquire skills to make a success of a market economy.

The change has been prompted by concern over the breakdown of the Soviet economy and fears that collapse could follow. There has been astonishment that the huge Soviet oil industry has begun to falter and may now need British advice, something which would have been unimaginable a few years ago.

Britain is not planning to give food aid or other types of

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Saturday Review

Sportsmen for sale



Jon Smith is powerful, a super-agent of sport. England cricketers, England footballers (not to mention Poland and Argentina), are his clients. Vicki Woods meets the man who turns fame into wealth

Vietnam: plus ça change...

Communist rule, capitalist power. Richard West hears money still talking loudest in Saigon

Dressed up, priced down



Top fashion houses make a splash with exotic designs few people wear. But how do they make money?

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Readership up by 13.4%

The Times gained more readers in April to September this year over 1989 than any other national daily newspaper. Its readership rose by 13.4 per cent to 1.14 million in the six months to end-September, the latest newspaper industry National Readership Survey has found. Page 5

EC intervention



The EC's Environment Commissioner, Carlo Ripa di Meana (above) is likely to tell the Government that it must reassess the scheme to build a motorway crossing over the Thames - a move which could affect the M3 Twyford Down plan. Page 10

Girl's ordeal

A schoolgirl described to court yesterday how she fell into "a deep sleep" and a frightening dream as a man with a moustache strangled her on Devil's Dyke on the South Downs, where he left her for dead after a sexual assault. Page 5

Charges dropped

Charges against a businessman and a scientist, accused earlier this year of illegally exporting parts of a huge artillery weapon to Iraq, were dropped by Customs investigators. Page 5

Kenya reforms

President Moi of Kenya is expected to approve significant constitutional reforms, including the abolition of public voting. Page 15

Cricket fixtures

The full list of first-class cricket fixtures for 1991 will be published in *The Times* tomorrow.

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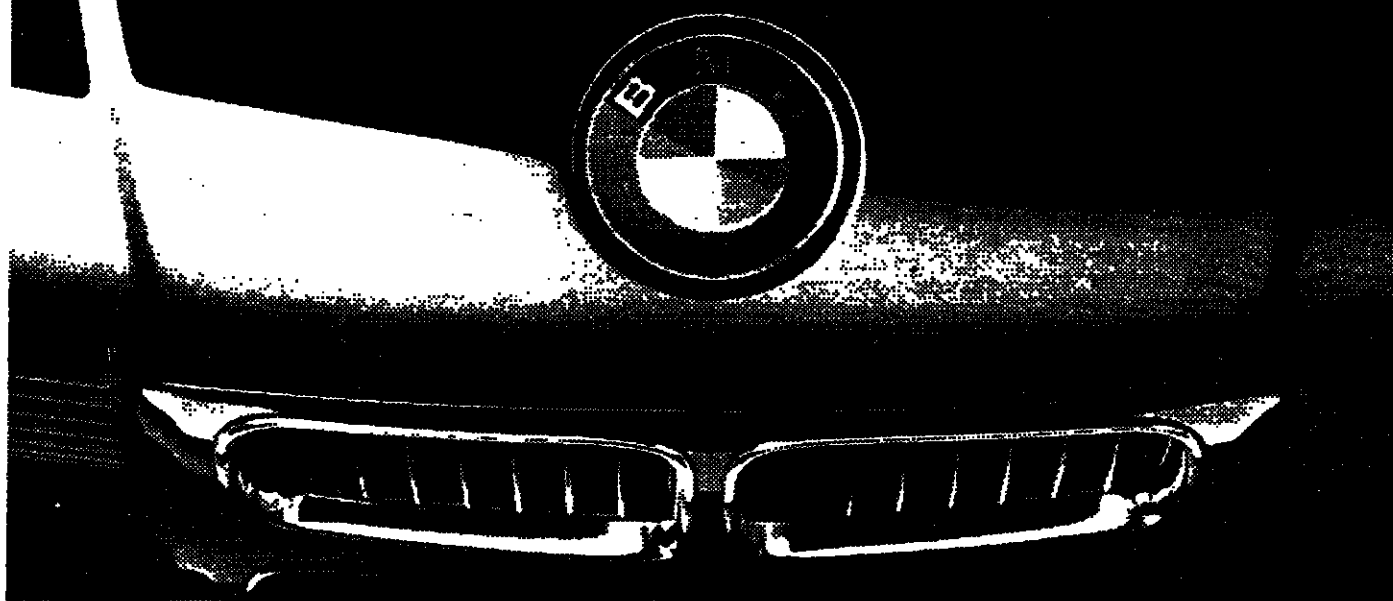
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By RICHARD FORD, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

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By KERRY GILL

By PHILIP WEBSTER, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

By TIM JONES
EMPLOYMENT
CORRESPONDENT

"We seem to have done wonderful things with privatisation. But I just wish we'd start at the beginning and taken the independence of the Bank of England as the first priority in charging it with the responsibility for the protection of the value of the currency," he added.



Duma: "Thatcher has proved her worth"

Mr Dunn added that he hoped that the Conservatives would unite after the leadership was settled. Only a united party could fulfil its chief purpose of denying Labour power and delivering policies distilled from the lively battle of ideas within Tory ranks.

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

fly back and report to MPs on Wednesday afternoon on the CSCE talks after the signing of the conventional arms treaty negotiated by the 22 Nato and Warsaw Pact countries.

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RSPCA dead pony advert ruled to be too offensive

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals was yesterday accused by the Advertising Standards Authority of causing unjustified shock and distress in a publicity campaign to mobilise public support for an end to the long-distance transport of live animals for slaughter.

One of the photographs used in the campaign, showing a dead pony hanging from a meat hook, was a shocking and graphic portrayal, the authority, which supervises the British code of advertising practice, said. The authority called for the immediate withdrawal of the advertisement.

Gavin Grant, campaigns director of the RSPCA, called the authority's ruling high-handed and said it would be a staggering blow to the society's campaign. "It is ironic that glossy pictures of dead animals for trivial purposes, like whisky advertisements surrounded by dead grouse, are acceptable. Yet they throw up their hands in horror at the RSPCA's attempt to alert people to the tragic fate that could await British horses," he said.

The dead pony photograph was one of three advertisements featuring slaughtered

animals. It has appeared in double-page spreads in *The Times*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Scotsman* and *The Glasgow Herald*.

The society last night said plans to repeat the advertisement in *The Guardian*, *The Aberdeen Press and Journal* and three party political publications would be dropped. Matti Alderson, director



Detail from the RSPCA's offending advertisement

general of the authority, said: "The RSPCA understandably wants to draw attention to its causes but this advertisement exceeds the bounds of what is acceptable. Publishers should have regard to the sensitivities of their readers before publishing advertisements which provoke revulsion."

The authority said the picture was distressing and irrelevant, because the issue addressed by the advertisement was the transportation of live animals not their method of slaughter. The RSPCA would be asked for substantiation that the photograph was an accurate reflection of the way in which horses were conveyed after slaughter.

Caroline Crawford, the authority's press officer, said the code required that the content of advertisements should not cause grave or widespread offence or excite distress merely in pursuit of an attempt to attract attention or shock. "This particular advertisement was a clear breach of the code," she said.

Launching the campaign last Tuesday, Mr Grant admitted that the pony in the picture had been slaughtered perfectly legally and humanely but said its use was legitimate as a "potent symbol" of the society's concern that the export of live horses to the Continent for slaughter might have to be resumed when the single market takes effect after 1992.

Freshly butchered horsemeat is popular in France and Belgium. Britain has effectively banned the live horse trade for food purposes since 1950 by allowing only animals above a specified value and age to be exported. The European Commission regards this as a restraint on trade that cannot continue after 1992.

"The Advertising Standards Authority clearly do not regard the threat that British horses could in future undergo the suffering and torture of long-distance transport to the Continent for slaughter as a serious matter," Mr Grant said. "They are totally out of touch with the concerns of the British public and media."

Last year the authority asked the society to substantiate or delete a claim in an advertisement, featuring a pile of dead dogs, that the number of animals being killed had increased because of the abolition of the dog licence. The claim was later omitted from the advertisement.

Radical reforms sought in equal pay laws

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

RADICAL proposals to reform the equal pay laws so that a pay award won by an individual would automatically be given to all employees at the workplace are called for by the Equal Opportunities Commission today.

The commission, which condemns the present equal pay laws as a "paradise for lawyers, hell for women", says that in spite of the existence of the equal pay laws for the past seven years, there is a substantial gap between the wages and salaries of men and women in Britain. This shows no signs of narrowing.

The commission calls for a statutory requirement that when an employee brings a successful equal pay claim at a tribunal, all employees in the same workplace doing the same or similar work should be entitled to the same award, including back pay.

In spite of the growth of individual contracts and merit pay, employers in general make arrangements for pay and other benefits collectively. Such sex discriminatory agreements can be tackled only through individual cases. However, the commission says, changes in law are needed to make the remedy more effective and to eliminate sex discrimination of both individuals and groups of workers.

The commission also calls for a new kind of "class action" so that collective pay agreements at a workplace could be challenged at industrial tribunals by any interested party, including the commission itself. The tribunal would then be able to order that sex discriminatory terms in collective agreements and pay structures be changed or removed.

That kind of formal mechanism to challenge pay structures is needed if serious progress is to be made towards eliminating pay discrimination, it says. At present, few cases are brought because of the length of time and cost involved. The average time for a claim to go through the full equal value procedure is 17 months. Cases can cost several thousand pounds to bring as they are often the subject of sustained challenge by employers, the commission says. Legal aid is not available so trade unions or the commission pay for most claims.

Watchdog calls for new laws to fight rising charity fraud

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

FRAUD and abuse will continue to damage Britain's £13 billion-a-year charity industry until the government brings in new laws to strengthen the powers of the Charity Commission, the National Audit Office says today.

The public spending watchdog found that most charities still fail to put in accounts to the commission or to report changes to their registration, making it more difficult to detect abuses. Although the commission was computerising its records and was stepping up staff training, legislation was needed urgently to tighten controls.

The report backs up earlier recommendations from the Commons public accounts committee and the senior civil servant Sir Philip Woodfield for better regulation to stop fraud, abuse and maladministration in the charity industry, which is expanding rapidly. The government published a white paper last year promising charity law reform

and is pledged to introduce a bill during this parliament. But no legislation was announced in the Queen's speech.

The audit office, which reports to the public accounts committee, said: "The effective control of fraud and abuse and the (Charity) Commission's ability to call in accounts and returns are dependent on new legislation. The total size of charity business and the continuing evidence of abuse suggest that there would be value in ensuring that legislation is introduced within the lifetime of the present parliament."

The Woodfield report, backed by the government, called for legislation to ban people convicted of offences including fraud or dishonesty from becoming charity trustees and to freeze bank accounts or transfer control of a charity's funds if mismanagement was suspected.

The audit office report says that no checking system for charities will work properly until the Charity Commission's register is on computer, the law is strengthened and staff are trained to detect fraud. "Until then it will continue to be of concern that the majority of charities are failing to notify the commission of changes to details on the register and to submit accounts."

The commission said the register should be 80 to 90 per cent accurate by 1993-4. The government has rejected the Woodfield report recommendation that charities failing to put in accounts should be struck off the register.

The commission started to call in accounts of all active registered charities last month using the new computerised system. The audit office reported: "In 1989 only 15,200 accounts were submitted, though another 3,300 were received as a result of prompting by the commission. The total of 18,500 represented about 11 per cent of registered charities."

ADRIAN BROWN



On the receiving end: a worker for the Imperial Cancer Research Fund collecting money in London yesterday

Labour warning on poll tax capping

By DOUGLAS BROOM, LOCAL GOVERNMENT CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR councils that deliberately set out to engineer a confrontation with the government over poll tax capping will get no support from their party, it emerged yesterday.

David Blunkett, the party's local government spokesman, said that while Labour would support councils which were unable to make cuts without sacrificing vital services, it would not condone "political confrontation". There are increasing indications that Labour councils are preparing to make big cuts rather than face capping as this involves intervention in their affairs at all levels by the environment department.

It is clear, however, that a number of hard-left mavericks, particularly in London, would like to persuade their councils to make a stand against Chris Patten, the environment secretary. Mr Blunkett made it clear yes-

terday that councils should set their budgets for next year on the basis of local need.

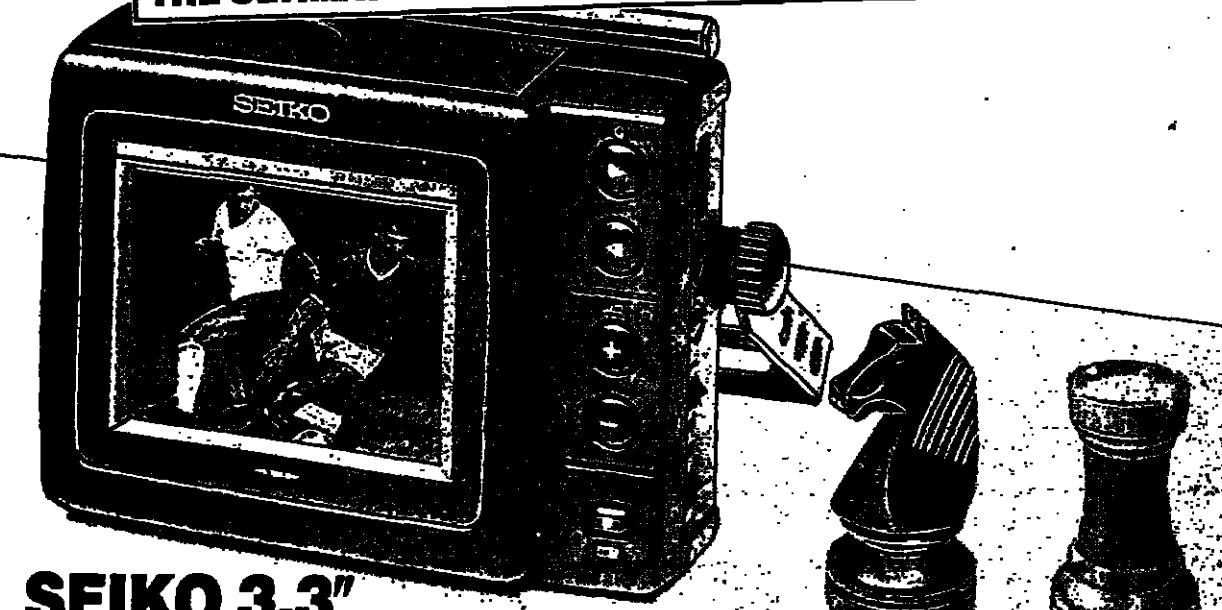
"The strategy suggested is not designed to precipitate political confrontation with central government, but to set a national framework for budget-making in the difficult months ahead," he said.

If Labour councils were forced into a position where they had to face capping to defend vital services, Mr Blunkett said the party would stand by them. In an article to be published in *Labour Party News* next month, he says councils should "give serious consideration to the capping criteria without allowing these rules to be the sole determinant of decisions".

The government's new capping powers, which will force councils to abide by targets set by Mr Patten, will mean that most councils will be effectively capped next year.

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BRITAIN'S charities face a difficult future in spite of a 3 per cent rise in corporate donations in the past year because the public has failed to respond to exhortations to give more and to donate money on a regular basis.

Although people who give most have increased their donations to charity over the past three years, the majority are giving less and a larger number are failing to donate anything at all, according to a report published yesterday by the Charities Aid Foundation. The findings of the report, *Charity Trends*, suggest that the loud requests charities and government have made to the public recently to give more have fallen on deaf ears.

Tax-breaks and give-as-you-earn payroll schemes introduced last spring by John Major, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, have not brought the bonanza to charities that many predicted. The report's findings seem to confirm fears that the recent series of scandals and incidents of financial mismanagement involving charities may have knocked public confidence.

Several charities, including War on Want and the Charity Commission, have come under scrutiny and been found wanting. The commission was fiercely criticised in 1988 and last year by the Commons public accounts committee, the National Audit Office and a Home Office scrutiny group.

Last year 26 per cent of households in Britain failed to make any charitable contribution, an increase of 2 per cent on the previous year. The median monthly contribution by individuals in the past 12 months has fallen by 59p, from £1.97 to £1.28. The researchers found that although 62 per cent of respondents had heard of payroll deduction schemes, only 20 per cent had been offered a scheme by employers and only 2 per cent had taken up the opportunity.

Pleas for more money leave public unmoved

A new survey shows that people are far less willing than in the past to dig deep for charities, reports Jamie Dettmer

"In the context of Telethons and Comic Relief, in the context of more generous tax encouragements, in the context of more urging to give and more professionalism and better fund-raising by the charities themselves, the British public was less responsive," Michael Brophy, director of the foundation, concluded in the report. "They reacted by giving less - very considerably less in real terms - than in the previous year."

He suggests that the poor response is because people "still think charity is something peripheral. There is no widespread acceptance that to engage in charitable work and to give money to charity in amounts you have to think about is a real responsibility we all have." The researchers found that a large majority of respondents thought the government ought to help the poor more and not rely on charities.

Some observers suspect that the public is still worried about abuses involving charities. Last year the Charity Commission received 1,000 complaints and 15 cases were referred to the Inland Revenue. The commission began 12 formal enquiries into charities. It examined the accounts of 4,000 organisations and investigations were set

up into the accounts of 18, one of which involved the possible misapplication of more than £1 million.

Several well-known groups have had widely publicised difficulties. Earlier this year War on Want disclosed that it had debts of £2 million and Oxfam has been engulfed in a public dispute about engaging in political activity. In the summer the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association was criticised for allegedly spending only half of its annual income and using excess money to increase its investments in shares and the money markets.

Since the commission was accused by the public accounts committee of failing to protect the public from the risk of fraud, abuse and maladministration, giant strides have been taken to improve the monitoring of charities. Improved government funding, from £7 million in 1988 to £16 million last year, has helped.

In the past two years the commission, headed by a new chief commissioner, Robin Guthrie, has managed to implement 20 of the recommendations made by Sir Philip Woodfield in a report into the organisation's policing powers. New legislation will be needed before another 26 recommendations can be introduced.

The commission has expanded the role of its monitoring and investigation unit and has increased its staff from 14 to 40. Last April, it finished transferring all its records on to a computer database.

The commission started a year-long census last month; it is asking all registered charities to update information on the central register. The unit estimates that up to 50 per cent of charities will not respond. The real detective work will then begin.

Leading article, page 17

TOP 10 DONORS (COMPANIES)

NetWest	£12,498,000
British Telecom	£12,309,000
Barclays	£10,408,000
BP	£9,000,000
British Gas	£8,000,000
Shell	£5,975,000
TSB	£5,775,000
ICI	£5,148,000
Tesco	£4,883,000
BSM	£4,071,000

TOP 20 FUND RAISERS

	Voluntary income	Admin expenditure
Oxfam	49,266,000	2,023,000
National Trust	43,418,000	3,488,000
Royal National Lifeboat Institute	40,487,000	1,847,000
Imperial Cancer Research	40,236,000	686,000
Save the Children Fund	36,502,000	1,256,000
Cancer Research Campaign	31,889,000	717,000
Seahorse Army	28,857,000	2,715,000
Charity Project Ltd	27,659,000	1,682,000
Barnardo's	25,778,000	1,649,000
NSPCC	22,868,000	1,105,000
Spastics Society	22,349,000	1,109,000
Help the Aged	21,868,000	344,000
Guide Dogs for the Blind	21,543,000	734,000
British Heart Foundation	20,705,000	536,000
RSPCA	20,467,000	1,421,000
British Red Cross Society	19,416,000	1,348,000
World Wide Fund for Nature	18,889,000	681,000
Christian Aid	18,456,000	697,000
Royal National Institute for the Blind	16,807,000	572,000
Marie Curie Memorial Foundation	14,290,000	244,000

Police fear car dump insurance racket

By QUENTIN COWDREY, HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT

POLICE in London believe that a substantial number of people are dumping ageing cars in scrapyards and informing insurance companies they have been stolen.

Commander Richard Monk, head of Scotland Yard's community involvement and crime branch, said yesterday that nearly half the cars stolen in the capital were never recovered. "It is quite possible some of these have never been stolen, ending up in a crusher and the insurance money being collected," he said.

In the year ending on Sept-

ember 30, 71,900 vehicles went missing in the capital, but of those just 37,000 were recovered. Police know that some thieves steal low-value cars to sell to scrapyards, but only recently has the possibility of widespread fraud by car owners emerged.

Mr Monk said he doubted whether the 34,000 cars still missing as a result of "thefts" reported last year were being used by criminals or had been exported. He was speaking as Scotland Yard announced that recorded crime in London had increased by 9 per cent in the year ending in

September, pushing the total to more than 800,000 for the first time.

An increase of 7 per cent in recorded auto crime to 203,800 offences accounted for about 25 per cent of the total.

● Jaguar is to halt production of £50 million worth of cars and cut up to 800 jobs at its Midlands factory as the company tries to cope with falling sales caused by economic conditions in Britain and the United States (Kevin Eason writes).

The jobs will be lost through natural wastage and early

retirement as the company moves towards flexible working hours next year. These were agreed as part of the 12.5 per cent pay package accepted by the workforce last week.

Production is expected to drop from last year's record 48,000 cars to 45,000 this year and as low as 42,000 in 1991, about the same as 1986 levels.

The company's 9,500 workers are being told that Jaguar needs to cut output of about 2,000 luxury limousines and sports models, equivalent to two weeks' production.

Motoring, page 33

BMA fears many opt-out hospitals will go bankrupt

Light shed on cause of fibrosis

Emotion in the court

Joy-riders kill

Case of...

Frank...

Case of...

هنا من الأمل

Girl describes how she was abducted then left for dead

By MICHAEL HORSNELL

A YOUNG schoolgirl described yesterday how she fell into "a deep sleep" and a frightening dream as a man with a moustache strangled her on Devil's Dyke on the South Downs, where he left her for dead after a sexual assault.

During a 50-minute courtroom ordeal, the girl, now aged eight, told a jury of her abduction and 14-mile drive in the boot of a car to the East Sussex landmark.

Lewes Crown Court has been told that Russell Bishop, aged 24, an unemployed labourer from Brighton, strangled the girl as she roller-skated past his stolen red Ford Cortina on February 4 and strangled her, rendering her "mercifully unconscious" before he began his assault.

Bishop, a father of two, who denies kidnapping, attempted murder, attempting to strangle with intent to enable him to commit indecent assault, and indecent assault, listened intently as the girl gave evidence.



Mr Justice Nolan: ordered accused from the dock

from behind a screen. He was ordered by Mr Justice Nolan to leave the dock so that his alleged victim did not see him as she entered the witness box. The girl, who chose to give evidence in court instead of on closed-circuit television, said her abduction had happened as she returned on roller boots to her home on the White Hawk estate on the outskirts of Brighton after she had gone to buy sweets. She had seen a red car on the opposite side of the road, with the boot open.

"As I went past, I went across the road and he came over and grabbed me from behind round my waist. He put me in the boot. Then he closed it and drove off. I started banging on the boot because there was a hammer in there. He said: 'Shut up'. I heard gravel from the road hitting the car. There was music, I can't remember what kind, coming from inside the car. I hit on the boot door with the hammer. I took the roller boots off because if he opened the boot I could get away quicker."

After the car had stopped she had been transferred to the back seat, and said: "He strangled me and he thought I was dead, but I wasn't. I was in a deep sleep."

She said that when she woke up, she had been in bushes and had not known what had happened to her clothes.

"I was scared. I couldn't walk all right. I was a bit dizzy and I kept on falling over. They were bramble bushes. They hurt. I got scratched. I pushed the brambles out and it hurt my hands. When I got

through the bushes, there was a muddy path and I was still a bit dizzy and I was trying to run but I kept falling over. I saw this car and there were some nice people there. They helped me. They put me with them in their car and they phoned the hospital."

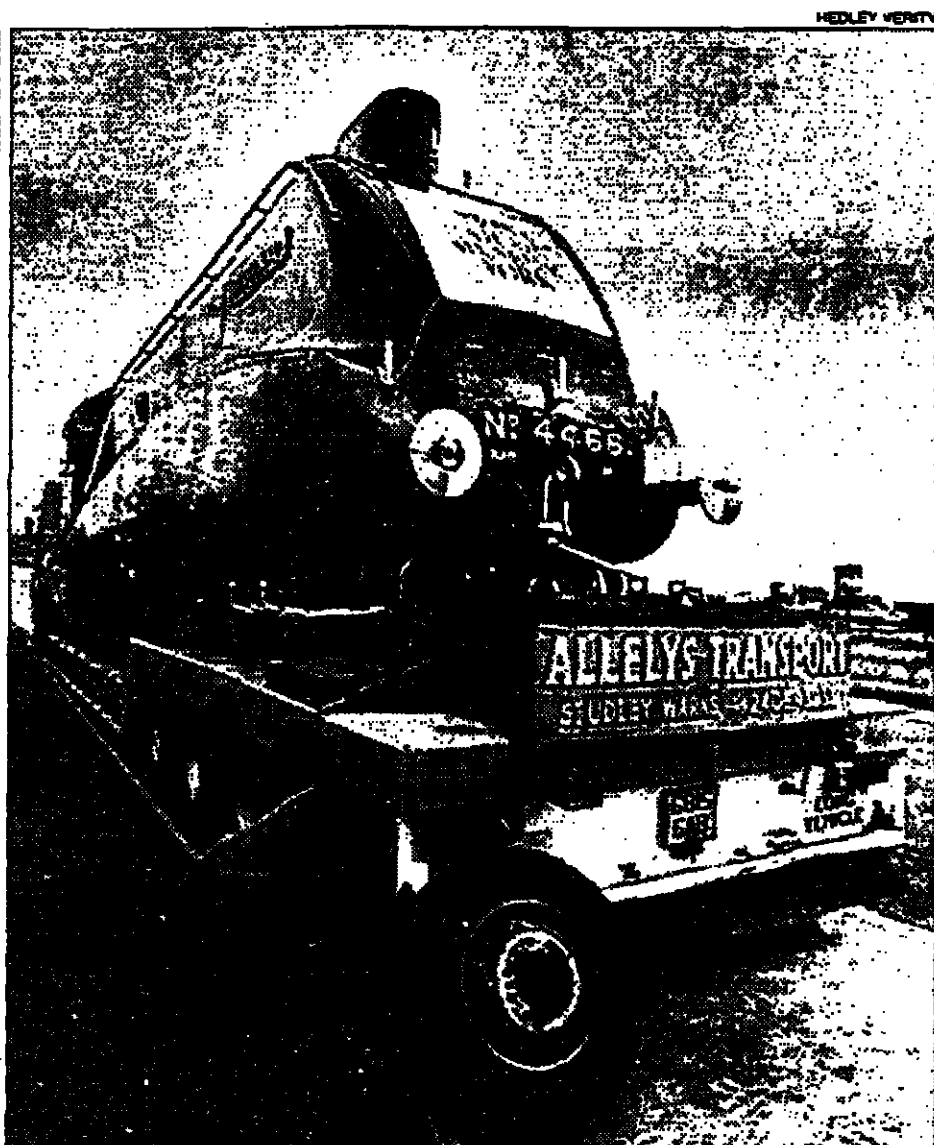
She had taken police officers and her mother to the spot where she had been abducted.

The girl described how, through a chink of light in the boot lid, she had found the hammer as well as a chisel, a can of WD40, a screwdriver and an orange pen.

Three days after the assault, she attended an identity parade and picked out "number nine" - Russell Bishop. Under cross-examination, she said that people at school had told her the name of the man she had picked out, but she "kept forgetting it".

She could not remember seeing the man's face when he grabbed her from behind. But she had noticed while he was strangling her a gold watch with a gold strap on his wrist.

The trial continues today.



Out of steam: Mallard, the record-breaking steam engine, stranded on the A64 near Tadcaster yesterday after a wheel fell off the transporter carrying it from Swindon to the railway museum in York, where it was due on Wednesday

Decision due over BSB satellite

By MELINDA WITTSTOCK
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Sky Broadcasting is expected to find out today whether it can continue broadcasting on BSB's Marco Polo satellite.

The Independent Broadcasting Authority, which could revoke BSB's licence on the grounds that the merged group breaks cross-media ownership regulations in the 1981 Broadcasting Act, is expected to rule today that the merger breached its contract with BSB. At present, News International owns 50 per cent of the merged group.

The IBA said that it would issue a statement today. It is thought that the IBA would not force BSB off the Marco Polo satellite until BSB subscribers have had their squarials replaced by Sky dishes.

George Russell, chairman of the IBA, said last night that the merger had wide-ranging repercussions for viewers, manufacturers, independent producers, and broadcasting regulation.

Mike Vandertar, former advertising sales director of BSB, left the company of his own accord. He was not asked to leave by the merged BSB.

as reported in The Times last week.

THE TIMES

THE Times gained more readers in April to September this year over 1989 than any other national daily newspaper. Its readership rose by 13.4 per cent to 1,140,000 in the six months to the end of September, the latest newspaper industry national readership survey has found.

The Independent suffered a 15.9 per cent year-on-year drop in readers to 1,039,000 million during the same period. The Guardian's readership was up 0.6 per cent to 1,240,000. Readership of The Daily Telegraph declined by 4.8 per cent to 2,296,000.

The survey, conducted by the Joint Industry Committee for National Readership Surveys (Jicnars), found The Times to be the "most cost-effective" quality daily newspaper for reaching AB and ABC1 adults, shareholders, those with more than two cars, and adults living in London and the South-East. ABC1s comprise 92 per cent of Times readers.

The NRS findings come as new Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) figures reveal slight drops in circulation for The Times, The Independent and The Guardian during October, mainly as a result of the downturn in consumer spending.

Circulation of The Times at 421,119, is down 0.67 per cent on September. The Independent sold 413,401 and The Guardian 426,124.

Jack Slipper wins £50,000 for BBC libel

Former Det Chief Supt Jack Slipper won £50,000 libel damages from the BBC in the High Court yesterday over allegations that he was incompetent and unprofessional.

Mr Slipper, aged 66, had sued the BBC over a film called *The Great Paper Chase* about his attempts to bring the train robber Ronald Biggs back from Brazil. His counsel, Desmond Browne, QC, said that Mr Slipper had found and detained Biggs, but was unable to return him to Britain. "The events were recounted in the film in such a way as to suggest, quite wrongly, that Mr Slipper had set about his mission in an incompetent and unprofessional manner."

The BBC apologised and agreed to pay the damages and costs, which may take the total bill to £500,000.

Councillor arrest

A Liverpool councillor and another man have been arrested by police investigating alleged corruption in the city. The men, who have not been named, were arrested on Wednesday night and were yesterday waiting to be questioned. Police said the arrests were not connected with the arrest last month of Derek Harton, the former deputy leader of Liverpool city council, and 21 others.

Fast continues

Desmond Ellis, the first alleged IRA member to be extradited to mainland Britain from the Irish Republic, was yesterday reported to be continuing his hunger strike after being remanded in custody. He began the hunger strike 37 days ago in an Irish prison. On Wednesday he was flown to London to face charges before Bow Street magistrates of conspiracy to cause explosions and possession of explosives.

Blake case pair lose fight to stop trial

TWO peace campaigners yesterday failed in their High Court attempt to avoid prosecution for allegedly helping the spy George Blake to escape from prison and flee to the Soviet Union 24 years ago.

Lord Justice Watkins and Mr Justice Hutchison rejected a claim that it would be "oppressive" and an abuse of the law for the trial of Patrick Pottle and Michael Randle to go ahead.

Their lawyers unsuccessfully argued in an application for judicial review that a high-level policy decision was taken by police and security services 20 years ago not to investigate and prosecute the pair because they were only "little fish" in the escape and "the big fish" had got away.

Lord Justice Watkins said it was an extraordinary and unique case. The delay in bringing the two men to trial was "obviously very long indeed - but not so long as to disable the vast majority of the people of this country, we think, from recalling the conspiracy caused by the escape of Blake and its serious implications."

Some people might sympathise with Mr Randle, aged 56, an academic, of Hollingwood Lane, Bradford, and Mr Pottle, aged 52, a retired antiques dealer, of Northview Road, Crouch End, north London. "Whether that sympathy is misplaced is not for us to say." However, the decision of Mr Justice Macpherson in April at the Central Criminal Court to allow the trial to proceed could not be criticised in principle.

Afterwards Mr Pottle said: "We are not afraid of a trial. We do not fear one and have always expected one. We would be happy for a jury to hear our case."

Charges dropped over Iraq supergun

By STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

CUSTOMS investigators yesterday dropped all charges against a businessman and a scientist accused earlier this year of illegally exporting parts of a giant artillery weapon destined for Iraq. The charges were brought after sections of high-grade piping were seized at a British port.

Peter Mitchell, aged 43, arrested as managing director of Walter Somers, an engineering company near Birmingham, had been accused of one charge of exporting prohibited items. Dr Christopher Cowley, aged 52, a scientist, of Horwells, Bristol, faced two charges of exporting prohibited items.

Sheffield magistrates were told that customs officials still believed that the eight sections of steel piping would have been used to make a gun. Annabelle Bolt, counsel for the prosecution, said, however, that the question was not whether the men were concerned with the exportation but whether they knew what was happening. "For a case like this to succeed evidence has to be such as to give a realistic prospect of success before a jury."

She said that in the circumstances, customs officials had decided to drop the charges against Mr Mitchell and it would be inappropriate to carry on against Dr Cowley. There was no doubt that the eight pipes made by Sheffield Forgemasters, seized at Teesport, and other parts found elsewhere in Europe "formed part of a very large gun or guns", she added.

Philip White, for Mr Mitchell, welcomed the withdrawal of the charges and asked for costs from central funds. Kevin Robinson, for Dr Cowley, who was not in court, said: "My client would have denied the charges anyway."

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Lamont condemns Delors scheme for monetary union

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

NORMAN Lamont, Treasury chief secretary, yesterday condemned the Delors proposals for closer European economic and monetary union as unworkable.

He predicted that the imposition of a single currency on the EC would see monetary union break up under the weight of increasing social and economic tensions.

In a speech to the Bruges group urging the Conservative party to unite behind the prime minister's vision of Europe, Mr Lamont said that if the Gatt negotiations collapsed thanks to the attitude of one or two EC countries, "the whole Community will be severely and rightly discredited in the wider world".

In a clear effort to counter the arguments and European enthusiasm of Sir Geoffrey Howe and Michael Heseltine, Mr Lamont criticised those who sought to suggest that the fear of a federal Europe was a mere chimera. A single currency, he said, would lead to a single government.

"How can policies to control inflation and to regulate demand be operated on a continental basis without pressure building up for fiscal policy, too, to be formulated at a continental level?"

Saying that people should be grateful for Margaret Thatcher's clarity when others were seeking to sweep such questions under the carpet, Mr Lamont said: "The Delors vision of monetary union is centralising and prescriptive. And as a prescription for all 12 member states in their current state of economic development it is unworkable."

Inflation rates ranged across the EC from 2.5 per cent to 22 per cent, interest rates from 8.5 per cent to 19 per cent and budget balances from a 1 per cent surplus to a 17 per cent deficit.

Mr Lamont predicted that if a single currency and monetary union went ahead now, Brussels would initiate ever-increasing transfers from well off northern countries to poorer southern neighbours. There would be increased disparities between regions, accompanied by migrations in search of prosperity and jobs.

"The monetary union could break up under the weight of increasing social and economic tensions, setting back the cause of closer economic integration by decades." The alternative was the EC central bank relaxing monetary policy under political pressures, bringing higher inflation and decreasing performance.

Mr Lamont quoted Karl Otto Pöhl, Bundesbank president, as agreeing with John Major that a joint monetary policy could be much more expensive than the alleged savings in transaction costs under a single currency.

Defending the chancellor's hard-ecu plan, Mr Lamont acknowledged that it evolved into a single currency, but that would be the result of decisions taken by the British people and British firms.

The chief secretary underlined Britain's hard-line negotiating stance for the monetary union talks when he said: "We are not prepared to see the fettering of member states' freedom to take appropriate decisions about appropriate levels of public expenditure, taxation and government borrowing."

Mr Lamont complained that the common agricultural policy cost the average family of four £700 a year and said: "The Community spends nearly twice as much preventing developing nations' imports from being sold in Europe as it gives these countries back in aid."

He dismissed parts of the social charter as harmful, saying that the costs it imposed amounted to an intricate network of barriers constructed against the countries of Eastern Europe that would wish to join the Community.

The committee's enquiry comes after last December's test findings that some ovens



policy cost the average family of four £700 a year and said: "The Community spends nearly twice as much preventing developing nations' imports from being sold in Europe as it gives these countries back in aid."

He dismissed parts of the social charter as harmful,

Letters, page 17

Constant use of microwave ovens 'risky'

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

MICROWAVE ovens in restaurants could be dangerous because their temperatures fall below safety levels during constant use, food scientists told the Commons agriculture committee yesterday.

The scientists admitted that they did not have sufficient evidence to judge the risks of food poisoning from heavy duty commercial microwaves.

Dr Dean Burfoot, principal scientific officer of the Agricultural and Food Research Council, told the committee that tests showed the high temperatures needed to kill bacteria sometimes fell during 90 minutes of continuous use.

Dr Howard Denner, head of the agriculture ministry's food science division, said that there was a lack of evidence that microwave cooking in commercial establishments could cause outbreaks of poisoning. It was a possibility that the popularity of microwaves, with 11 million in use, was related to the spread of food poisoning, but the ministry had no evidence one way or the other.

The committee's enquiry comes after last December's test findings that some ovens

did not reach the required temperatures when manufacturers' instructions were not followed.

Dr Denner said that the government would like manufacturers to state clearly that their domestic ovens were not suitable for commercial use, but had met reluctance in the industry.

Mr Jim Collis, director-general of the Association of Manufacturers of Domestic Electrical Appliances, said: "To say 'do not use it for commercial use' is like having a label on a lawnmower saying 'do not use this for cutting down trees'."

Bill against smoking for Faults

A BILL to tighten the law on shops selling cigarettes to children will be introduced by Andrew Faulds, Labour MP for Warley East, who won top place yesterday in the ballot for private members' legislation (Sheila Gunn writes).

After his success in the annual parliamentary draw, Mr Faulds said that as a rabid anti-smoker he will use the opportunity to bring forward a bill promoted by Parents against Tobacco.

His number was the first of 20 to be picked. Only the first six MPs in the ballot stand a chance of getting enough parliamentary time to steer a politically neutral measure through Parliament. Some of the MPs are still considering how to use their place.

Roy Hughes, Labour MP for Newport East, is expected to reintroduce Tony Banks's bill to make it an offence to disturb badger sets. The bill was blocked last session by fox-hunting MPs who complained that it would prevent the entrances to sets being stopped up before hunts.

The top six places went to Mr Faulds, Sir Richard Body (Holland with Boston, C), Rosie Barnes (Greenwich, Ind SD), John Bowis (Bathurst, C), Mr Hughes and Michael Woodcock (Ellesmere Port and Neston, C).

Prison number falls to 44,540

The prison population in England and Wales, 44,540, was 2,962 below the figure of a year ago, David Waddington, home secretary, said.

In another reply, John Patten, home office minister, said that improved probation supervision being introduced as part of the move towards substituting community based punishment for prison sentences in less serious cases.

Sickert 'G' accepted

A 1907 painting by Walter Sickert has been accepted for the nation in lieu of £84,000 tax. David Mellor, the arts minister, said that *Girl at a Window* by Little Rachel had not yet been allocated to a public collection.

Counsel cash up by 10%

Marriage guidance organisations are to receive an increase of about 10 per cent in grants, John Patten, home office minister, announced in the Commons.

Squatting law

Tighter laws on squatting in unoccupied residential property were promised by John Patten, home office minister, during Commons questions.

Crime move

Regional schemes encouraging housebuilders to adopt crime prevention standards are to be adopted nationally, John Patten, home office minister, said.

Patten's pps

Jeremy Hanley (Rippon and Barnes) has been appointed parliamentary private secretary to Christopher Patten, environment secretary.

Parliament next week

The main business in the House of Commons next week is expected to be:

Monday: Northern Ireland (Emergency Provisions) bill, second reading.

Tuesday: Criminal Justice bill, second reading.

Wednesday: Debates on Opposition motions on Scotland and on the textile industry.

Thursday: Disability Living Allowance and Disability Working Allowance bill, second reading, and Armed Forces bill, second reading.

Friday: Debate on Gatt.

The main business in the Lords is expected to be:

Monday: National Heritage (Scotland) bill, second reading.

Tuesday: New Roads and Street Works bill, second reading.

Wednesday: Debate on education.

Thursday: Debate on European economic, monetary and political union.

Parliament today

Commons (9.30): Debate on road safety.

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18 Months Interest Free Credit*
HOTPOINT 9355... 179.99
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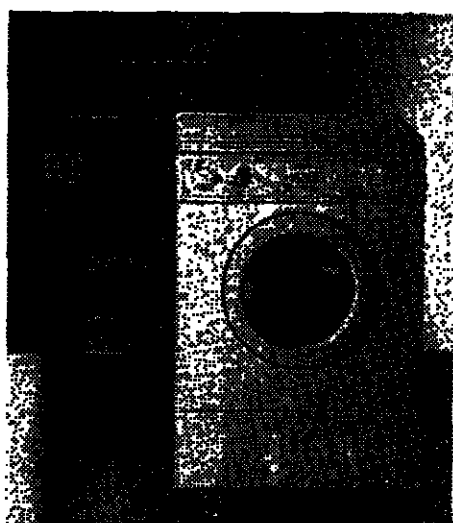
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BMA fears many opt-out hospitals will go bankrupt

By JILL SHERMAN, SOCIAL SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

MANY of the 65 hospitals applying to become self-governing trusts risk financial unviability and bankruptcy, the British Medical Association said yesterday.

"We believe that the sums do not add up," Jeremy Lee-Potter, BMA chairman, said. "At the end of the line there will be bankruptcies for some. There will be winners and losers and we are very afraid for those patients where a hospital is unsuccessful."

Publishing an analysis of the applications for self-governing status, Dr Lee-Potter urged William Wakefield, the health secretary, to tread cautiously when he decided which ones should go ahead.

Light shed on cause of fidgeting

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

CHILDREN diagnosed as hyperactive, who fidget constantly and cannot concentrate, might be suffering from an abnormality of the brain, according to research carried out in the United States.

The condition has often been attributed to poor diet, but a study at the US National Institute of Medical Health has shown that hyperactive adults have low activity in areas of the brain that control attention and movement.

Alan Zametkin, of the institute, studied 25 hyperactive adults using a technique, considered possibly unethical on children, in which radioactive material is injected into the brain, allowing the most active parts to be identified.

The subjects' brains were compared with those of 50 normal adults during the performance of a simple task. The hyperactive adults did just as well as the controls, but their brains were less active overall, and particularly in two regions believed to be used in paying attention.

The finding, published this week in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, helps to explain why hyperactivity can be successfully treated with stimulants. Instead of making patients more fidgety, they increase activity in the lazy parts of the brain.

Emigrant returns for £500,000 inheritance

A MAN who went to Australia on a £10 assisted passage has returned to inherit £500,000 including a country house whose contents were auctioned by Phillips in Cardiff yesterday (John Shaw writes).

Richard Ashton, aged 55, a management consultant, watched the sale begin and then slipped away to continue tracing the family he never knew existed. The house has been sold for £200,000 and the contents are expected to raise £250,000 to £300,000.

Born in Belfast, Mr Ashton set off for Australia with only £7 in about 1965 and he built up a business near Adelaide.

He received a telephone call last year telling him a distant relative had died in Wales. "It was the kind of thing that only happens to other people in novels," he said yesterday.

The call came from genealogists in London trying to trace relatives of Brigadier J.O.M. Ashton, who had died at the family home near Tenby, Pembrokeshire.

Mr Ashton found hundreds of letters and photographs that filled out his family tree in Britain, Canada and the Middle East. He said the documents had been his greatest find and he was taking them to Australia to read at leisure.

Joy-riders kill baby

A BABY of 10 months was killed on Wednesday evening when his pushchair was hit by a stolen car a few yards from his home in Delaval Gardens, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Northumbria police said yesterday that they were hunting two youths who had jumped out of the red Montego just before it hit Richard Hartill's pushchair. The baby's mother, Shirley Mitchell, aged 16, was not injured. The stolen car was being pursued by a police car. Chief Supt Bob Bensley said: "Taking cars for joy-riding is officially classed as minor crime in the courts - but is what happened last night a minor crime?"

Case discharged Mains moved

Alan Minter, the former boxer, aged 40, was discharged when he appeared before magistrates in Newmarket, Suffolk, to be committed for trial accused of actual bodily harm against Peter Hutton, a local jockey, aged 23.

Fraud charges

John Ryman, aged 60, the former Labour MP for Blyth, Northumberland, was charged at Bath magistrates' court on four counts of criminal deception relating to £134,000. The case was adjourned until February 15 and he was given conditional bail.

Custody order

Eric Rubin, the antiques dealer extradited from Israel to be charged after security guards at the Knightsbridge Safety Deposit Centre were robbed of £40 million in July, 1987, was remanded in custody until December 13 by Horseferry Road magistrates' court.

Pictures reward

Sir Nicholas Bacon has offered £50,000 for the return of valuable paintings stolen in a £500,000 raid on Raveningham Hall, in Norfolk.

Deer warning

The Red Deer Commission says that more than 60,000 wild deer may have to be shot in the Highlands this winter because of over-population.

Staff bonus

The Irish government is planning to share £500,000 in unclaimed prize money accrued by the Irish Hospitals Sweepstakes, which went into liquidation three years ago, between the 650 former staff.

Classroom stress takes its toll on teachers

Changes in work practice and poor discipline are helping to make stress a problem for teachers. The result can lead to early retirement, low morale and poor health, David Tytler reports

SVLVIA Jewell taught English in a Wakefield secondary school for 18 years before the stress became too much and she quit to open a shop. "I left before I went under and I know what a pressurised world teachers live in," she says. "It is not possible to do it all and to remain a sensible and human person."

Others break down under the pressure. Every week 40 teachers ring the stress line run by the National Union of Teachers.

The Health and Safety Executive is today issuing a booklet on how coping with classroom stress, which unions and employers say is growing.

A survey by the Manchester university Institute of Science and Technology carried out earlier this year for the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers claimed that stress was leading to alarming levels of smoking and alcohol abuse. One teacher in five smoked with a similar number drinking the equivalent of 10 pints of beer a week or more. Last year teachers were on average

absent from school for seven days. A quarter said they suffered a significant illness related to stress, such as myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME), stomach upsets, asthma, back and neck pains, anxiety and depression.

The National Association of Headteachers estimates that about a third of heads who take early retirement do so because of stress. David Hart, general secretary of the association, said: "There is an urgent need to raise the morale of and to provide motivation for the most senior members of the profession. Better training, more administrative support for heads and more resources are essential."

Typical of those who took early retirement is a 52-year-old headteacher of a large primary school. He said: "I had a nervous breakdown caused by stress and overwork, with stress leading to severe physical problems."

Elizabeth Gyngell, of the Health and Safety Executive, said that its research showed genuine cases of stress among teachers with many of them receiving medical help. A



Dr Trevor Jellis, a stress expert, demonstrates relaxation by massage to teachers

survey of the problem is being carried out by Birmingham university.

In the workforce as a whole about 10 per cent suffer from serious stress, with about a third affected by less serious problems.

"Teachers are facing a lot of change at the moment and change is always a stressful problem," Mrs Gyngell said. Most calls received at the NUT's ten regional offices

are from primary teachers. One came from a woman in her fifties who suddenly found she simply could not face school. She blamed increased workload associated with the introduction of the national curriculum, which she said was turning her from a teacher into a manager.

A 38-year-old man has been absent from his primary school since June with pal-

pitations and reactive depression after 18 years as a teacher. A younger primary school teacher said he was leaving teaching after only three years because of the amount of work he had to take home with him, which, he said, left him without a life of his own.

Poor classroom discipline is a big cause of stress among teachers and in his report on school discipline Lord Elton

said that more should be done to train teachers in good classroom management.

Peter Dawson, general secretary of the Professional Association of Teachers, believes the whole question of stress among teachers is exaggerated. "Teachers have talked themselves into a nervous breakdown. It is a stressful occupation. It has always been and always will be. It is no more stressful now than it has ever been, except that teachers are now being asked, quite rightly, to do things they have never done before," he said.

"Teachers like going on doing what they have always done, being asked to change is stressful. Teachers more than most do not like coping with change. The very good teacher is finding no problem at the moment. The bad teachers have enough to cope with to survive in the classroom if they are to survive at all."

"Stress is being talked up. Some teachers' leaders have attempted to talk teachers in to a nervous breakdown. If you tell them enough that their morale is low, that they are overworked and misunderstood and that education is in decline they will believe you. Some teachers' leaders have a vested interest in telling teachers they are awful. Many parents, however, will say the teachers of their children are doing a good job."

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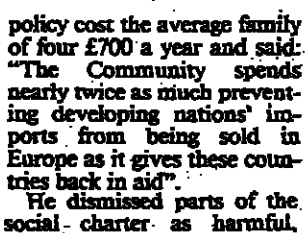
By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

"How can policies to control inflation and to regulate demand be operated on a continental basis without pressure

"The monetary union could break up under the weight of increasing social and eco-

Mr Lamont complained that the common agricultural

He dismissed parts of the social charter as harmful,



By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL REPORTER

The committee's enquiry comes after last December's test findings that some ovens

A BILL to tighten the law on shops selling cigarettes to children will be introduced by Andrew Faulds, Labour MP for Blakeney East, who was top

A BILL to tighten the law on shops selling cigarettes to children will be introduced by Andrew Faulds, Labour MP for Walsley East, who was tar-

for Waverly East, who will top place yesterday in the ballot for private members' legisla-

accepted for the nation in lieu of £84,000 tax. David Mellor, the arts minister, said that *Girl at a Window*, *Little Rachel* had not yet

Crime move

mond and Barnes) has been appointed parliamentary private secretary to Christopher Patten, environment secretary.

Working Allowance bill, second reading, and Armed Forces bill, second reading. Friday: Debate on Gatt. Parliament today Commons (9.30): Debate on road safety.

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1990; 263: 1033-1037.

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ANNE HATHORNE

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Squatter violence brings down ruling coalition in Berlin

FROM ANNE McELVOY IN BERLIN AND IAN MURRAY IN BONN

BERLIN'S left-wing red-green coalition collapsed last night after the police raid on occupied tenements in the east of the city on Wednesday, which led to two days of rioting in Berlin and other German cities.

The 17 MPs of the Alternative List who formed the government in Berlin together with the Social Democrats, held several hours of talks on whether to quit the coalition. A meeting of the Alternative List's branches on Wednesday night had recommended that the movement should withdraw immediately in protest at the senate's decision to order police to storm the squats and forcibly evict the inhabitants.

Its leader, Renate Künast, said the SPD had failed to keep its promise to consult its coalition partner on big police actions before it decided to clear the 12 occupied tenements by force. Frau Künast said the move had provoked violence from the squatters which resulted in two days of rioting, 200 arrests and serious injuries to four policemen and several of the protesters.

Two Alternative List MPs were later discovered by police in the occupied tenements but were released in accordance with parliamentary immunity regula-

tions. The Alternative List, a more radical version of the Green party, has over 11 per cent of the votes in Berlin. Its policies had made it a difficult and unpredictable coalition partner.

A breach less than three weeks before the all-German elections makes a grand coalition of Social and Christian Democrats more likely in Berlin than another red-green co-operation.

Several thousand demonstrators marched through the city on Wednesday night in support of the evicted squatters. They carried banners accusing the police of "state violence" and chanted, "no return to the violent thirties".

The violence in Berlin spilled over into cities in North Rhine-Westphalia and Lower Saxony. Masked supporters of the squatters took to the streets causing thousands of marks of damage. Their raids were similar and all took place over the same short period of time. Police believe that they could well have been co-ordinated centrally by anarchist groups.

One of the worst incidents was in Hanover early yesterday when a group went on the rampage in the centre, smashing 28 shop windows in just five minutes. A police

spokesman said the city had never experienced such a "concentrated operation of chaos". In Cologne at midnight about 50 masked youths tore through the city centre, smashing 26 windows in a luxury shopping area. Police arrested three people, all squatters, who said that the attack had been mounted in support of those battling with the authorities in Berlin.

Walter Momper, Berlin's mayor, yesterday reiterated his support for the police action and said that a decision by the Alternative List to quit was "the coward's solution of stealing away from responsibility when times get tough". He said that the squatters had employed the tactics of civil war. "The brutality was unbelievable," he said, "it was sheer bloodlust".

But the Eastern German New Forum Citizens' Group and the Roman Catholic Bishop of Brandenburg, Gottfried Forck, criticised the Berlin government for not pursuing a more patient negotiating strategy with the demonstrators.

"Violence of this sort once begun soon becomes endemic," Bishop Forck said. Germany's task in the coming months was to show true unity, not deepen existing social divisions, he said.



Scene of disaster: a Swiss fireman inspecting the wreckage of the Alitalia DC9, which crashed on approach to Zurich airport, killing all 46 people on board. Investigators said it had been flying below the normal altitude

Crashed airliner was flying too low

Zurich — An Italian airliner that crashed north of here, killing all 46 people on board, was flying too low as it headed for a landing at Zurich's Kloten airport, investigators said yesterday.

The Alitalia DC9, which took off from Milan, was flying about 975 ft below the normal altitude for aircraft approaching the airport, according to local police and air

controllers. Six Americans, two Japanese and a young Italian actor were among those killed, a spokesman for the Italian carrier said in Rome. The only Briton among the passengers was named as Martin John Hodgson, aged 35.

A police spokesman, Eugen Thommann, said the 40 passengers and six crew were killed instantly when the plane crashed into a wooded hill and

burst into flames. Swiss aviation experts found the plane's flight recorder on Wednesday night and sent it for laboratory decoding. Alitalia's general director, Ferruccio Pavolini, has gone to Zurich to help Swiss investigators investigating the crash, the airline said in Rome.

The DC9 crashed in darkness near the village of Stadel, close to the German border

and about six miles north of the airport. Officials said the pilot reported nothing amiss, and, although it had been raining, visibility was good and there was no fog in the region.

The aircraft disappeared from radar screens two minutes before its scheduled landing. When it crashed, Mr Thommann said, the plane blew apart on impact and burst into flames. Debris was scattered over a wide area, with only the tail section and engines left intact. Remains of the victims were taken to Zurich for identification.

Firemen, police and rescue teams continued sifting through debris yesterday. Some witnesses said they saw a flash of light and heard an explosion seconds before the aircraft crashed into the hillside.

The crash was the worst in Switzerland since April 1973, when a British aircraft crashed near Basle with the loss of 108 lives. The last big crash involving an Italian passenger plane was in October 1986, when an ATR 42 aircraft crashed at Conca di Trazzo, near Como, killing 37 people (AFP).

Marchers attack Romanian rulers

By TIM JUDAH
IN BRASOV AND
OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THOUSANDS of protesters marched in cities across Romania yesterday, many of them demanding the resignation of the government of Petre Roman, the prime minister.

More than 100,000 took to the streets of Bucharest, and 10,000 marched in the Transylvanian city of Brasov, and another 15,000 in Timisoara. It was one of the strongest anti-government demonstrations since miners were called into Bucharest last June to put a violent end to riots and demonstrations in the capital.

Yesterday's meetings were called ostensibly to commemorate the 1987 Brasov uprising. Three years ago workers in the city's Red Flag lorry plant, angered by a seven-day working week, falling wages and miserable living conditions, began a march which culminated in the sacking of the local communist party headquarters. These events are hailed as the first real attempt by Romanians to rid themselves of the dictatorship of Nicolae Ceausescu.

Yesterday's protesters in Brasov heard speeches made by a number of anti-government personalities. The best known was the dissident Doina Cornea. She said: "Today is a day of sadness. We have met with failure. The people who judged the Brasov demonstrators in 1987 are the same people who judged those who fired on the revolutionary crowds in 1989."

The crowd roared and shouted anti-government slogans, including "Ilescu, you will meet your death in Brasov". President Ilescu has long been a target of those opposed to his National Salvation Front because of his communist past.

Yesterday's demonstrations were the first serious protest since big price increases were introduced two weeks ago. One man held a placard saying: "We want bread not lies." Another held a banner with a picture of a shoe on it. Next to the shoe was its new price, about 10 days' salary.



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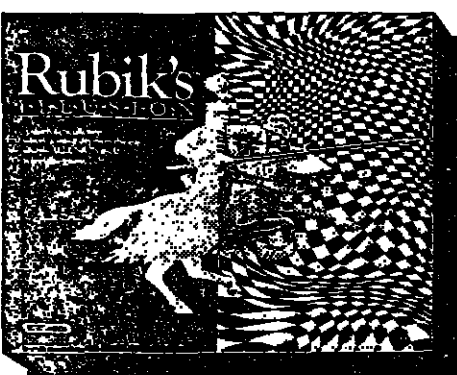
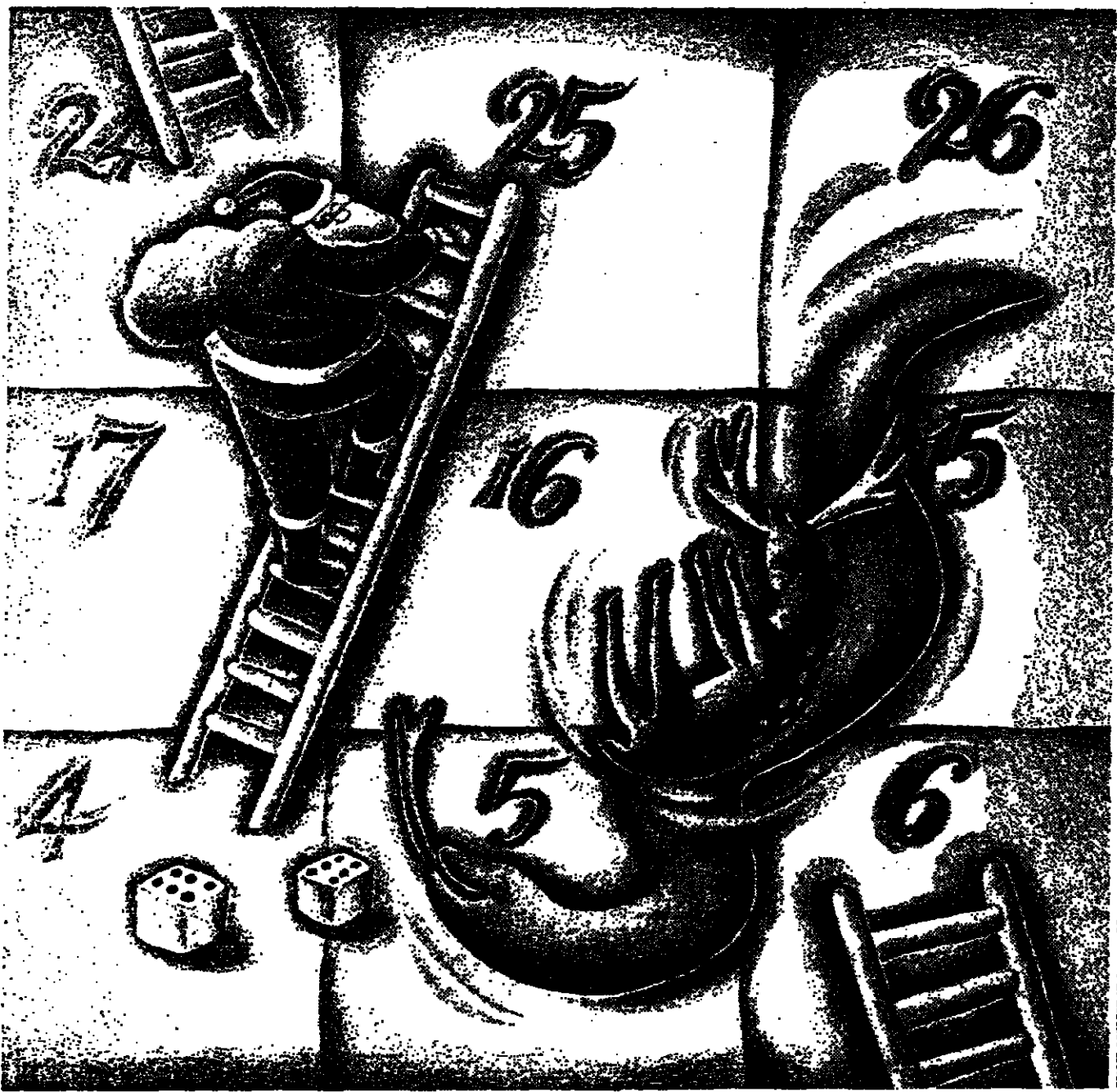


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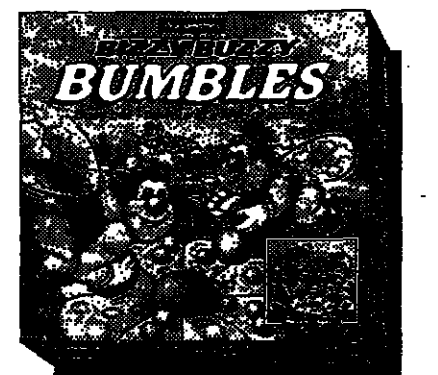


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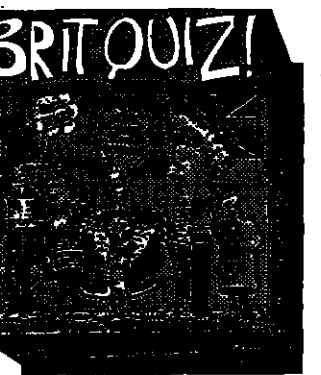
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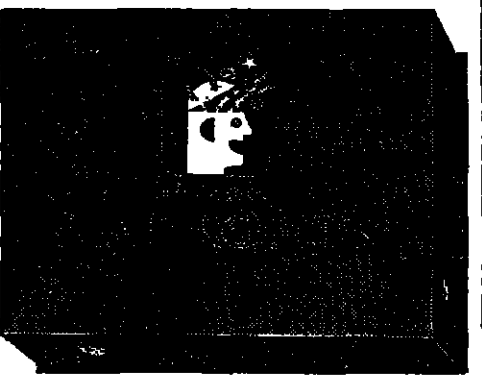
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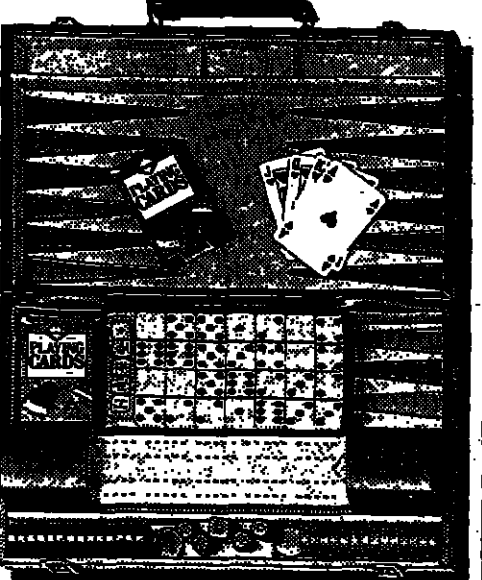
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A major misconception is that all nuclear waste is the same.

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Consequently, they are safely dealt with in completely different ways.

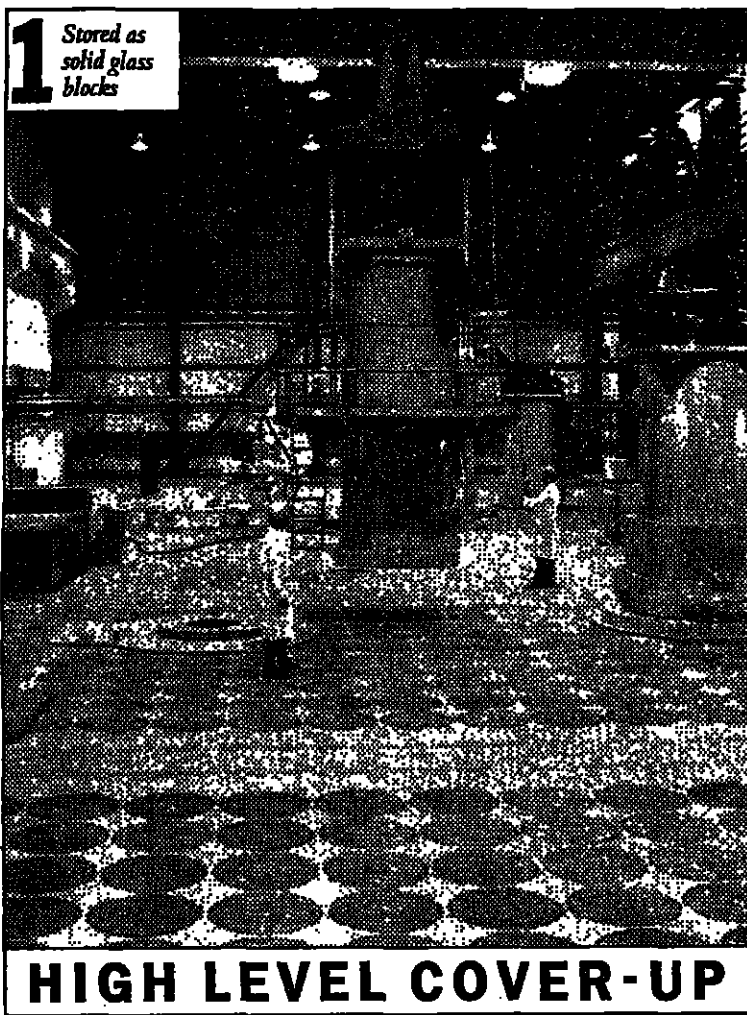
The most radioactive is *High Level Waste*, which results from reprocessing spent nuclear fuel.

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This method reduces the waste to 1/3 of its original volume.



HIGH LEVEL COVER-UP

Or, if you want to look at it another way, all the high level waste produced at Sellafield in the last 30 years could easily be contained in just 4 double-decker buses.

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for a deep underground repository.

The least radioactive waste of all is *Low Level Waste*, such as paper towels, gloves, protective clothing and laboratory equipment which not only come from

the nuclear industry but from hospitals, research laboratories and other industries where radioactive materials are handled.

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INTERMEDIATE LEVEL COVER-UP



LOW LEVEL COVER-UP

BRITISH NUCLEAR FUELS
Managing waste at Sellafield.

Palestinians mark 'independence day' in homes and hearts

PALESTINIANS woke at 5am yesterday on what they regard as Palestine Independence Day to the sound of loud-blasters on army vehicles warning Arabs to stay indoors or face punishment. The response was defiance; women appeared in Palestinian national costume and young Arab boys, forbidden to sing or chant Palestinian slogans, gathered on street corners to blow a chorus of wooden whistles.

Angered, but under orders to keep casualties low, troops fired in the air and chased the boys indoors. One or two still managed to string balloons in the bannan colours of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation — red, green and black — across the street. One boy waved our car to a halt and tied a balloon to the car aerial. "We want

our own country," he shouted in English. "Palestine."

In Gaza, thousands of Arabs poured on to the streets to sound car horns and set off fireworks in the early hours yesterday before the curfew confining a million Palestinians to their homes took effect.

Yet despite the muted defiance, independence seems as remote as ever two years to the day since the Palestinian National Council, meeting in Algiers, declared a theoretical state of Palestine in the West Bank and Gaza. The move came after concessions by the PLO, which accepted the concept of two states in former Palestine, one Arab and one Jewish.

Nearly three years after the *intifada* or Palestinian uprising began, however, Israeli authorities

are if anything tightening their grip and have even introduced a gravel-shooting cannon to counteract riots.

The arrest this week of leading Palestinian activists, including Radwan Abu Ayash, head of the West Bank journalists' association, has been greeted with dismay by both Arab intellectuals and left-wing Israelis as a sign that even moderate Palestinian spokesmen who have risked the disapproval of Arab radicals by promoting dialogue with Israel are

being targeted by the Israeli security forces.

"To street radicals, someone like Radwan Abu Ayash is so moderate as to be almost suspect," said Mona Rishmawi, a Palestinian human rights lawyer.

"He appeared on Israeli television and was always one of the first Palestinians to be consulted by visiting Western politicians. By arresting him Israelis can only encourage the emergence of a more extreme leadership."

Another of those arrested this

week, Dr Zeid Abu Zeid, had even been invited in the past to lecture to Israeli army officers on the Palestinian question.

In the wake of the arrests, the Palestinian mood is one of frustration and anger, with the traditional leadership, based on the professional classes and leading Arab families, increasingly unable to prevent a turn to extremism.

Time and again, leading figures say that the fervent support given to President Saddam Hussein by young Palestinians is based not on admiration for the regime in Baghdad but rather on gratitude that someone of authority in the Arab world is articulating the Palestinian cause and standing up to the United States.

"Two years ago there was euphoria," Miss Rishmawi says.

"We have high hopes of moves on the international stage toward negotiations with Israel on independence."

Her father, Abdullah, agrees. "People always used to accuse us of being negative towards Israel. Since the Algiers declaration we have been begging the Israelis to negotiate — only to find that it is they who are negative."

Amid the dimmed celebrations, Palestinians see two glimmers of hope: a solution of the confrontation over Kuwait could involve an Israeli-Palestinian settlement as well, despite Western rejection of any link; and secondly, the resurgence of the *intifada* following the Temple Mount killings last month has forced the Israelis to reinstitute a "green line" between Israel and the occupied territories, in effect introducing a form of partition. According to Faisal Hussein, the most prominent Palestinian still at liberty (he is on bail after being arrested on Temple Mount), Israel is not interested in peace talks, and this week's arrests show that "the Israelis themselves are encouraging instability and danger."

Mr Rishmawi said: "Two years ago, we of the older generation hoped that Israel might one day greet us on Palestine Day and ask us to act as good neighbours. But now we can celebrate only in our homes and in our hearts."

A young activist said: "Perhaps it is time to reassess our strategy two years on. We have to take a hard look at where the policy of compromise and diplomacy has actually got us."

Arab leaders turn down Hassan plea for summit

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

HOPES for an Arab meeting to resolve the confrontation in the Gulf were effectively dashed yesterday when Egypt, Syria and Kuwait rejected King Hassan of Morocco's call for an emergency Arab League summit to avert war. They placed the blame for their decision firmly on Iraq for setting unacceptable preconditions for attending.

President Mubarak of Egypt and President Assad of Syria issued a joint statement after two days of talks in Damascus. They regretted "Iraq's foiling of any political solution that aims at restoring the situation in Kuwait to that prior to August 2". Iraq's preconditions had made it "difficult, if not impossible, to convene such a summit".

Prince Saud al-Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, had said on Wednesday that Iraq must agree to withdraw from Kuwait before Saudi Arabia would attend the summit.

In its rejection, Kuwait said there was no point in a summit while Iraq continued to occupy the emirate. Kuwaiti officials, meanwhile, also announced the formation of a new 40,000-strong national army to liberate their country by force.

Thousands of young Kuwaiti men are being trained in the Gulf states and a stronger air force is being built round the core of about 40 aircraft in which pilots escaped in August. Mubarak al-Duwaili, a member of Kuwait's government, said that this was to "prepare for the battle to liberate Kuwait, which has been plundered by Iraq".

The Soviet Union, which had earlier proposed an international Arab summit, gave a warning that the confrontation had reached a dangerous stage and

that time was running out for a peaceful settlement. After talks with King Hassan in Rabat yesterday, Vladimir Petrovsky, a Soviet deputy prime minister and special envoy, warned Iraq that there would be war unless it withdrew from Kuwait. "Today the time factor is very important. There is not much time left to settle the crisis. Despite the very tense situation it is still possible to avoid war," he said.

Iraq was the first of the Arab League's 21 members to respond to the summit call, saying it would not attend unless foreign forces withdrew from the Gulf and the talks took in the Palestinian question as well. Later Baghdad added that it also wanted the resolutions of the August Arab League summit in Cairo scrapped. At those talks, a majority of 12 demanded Iraq's withdrawal from Kuwait and agreed to send troops to Saudi Arabia.

President Mubarak and President Assad said they would continue to try to find an Arab solution in consultations with "other Arab brothers", to safeguard the supreme interests of the Arab nation, and its solidarity. King Hassan's call for a summit had immediately caused a flurry of diplomatic activity in the region.

President Mubarak flew into Damascus from Libya where he had talks with Colonel Gaddafi on Monday, leading to speculation that Egypt, Libya and Syria were planning a joint proposal for a settlement. The collapse of the summit will disappoint the Arab world, united in its desire for a peaceful settlement, if unable to agree on how to achieve it.

Letters, page 17



Follow-my-leader: columns of women soldiers marching past a portrait of President Saddam Hussein at Mosul in northern Iraq, during a parade of the popular army of civilian volunteers who have answered their leader's call to defend their country against possible foreign attack

Service chief rejects claim Tory fight will hurt morale

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN DABRAN

AIR Vice-Marshal Sandy Wilson, the second-ranking British officer in the Gulf, yesterday rejected claims by Tom King, the defence secretary, that a divisive contest for the Conservative party leadership would undermine the morale of British troops in the region.

The denial, made in a series of interviews by the vice-marshal as he was preparing to hand over his post as Deputy British Forces Commander Middle East, was seen as likely to weaken the accusations against Michael Heseltine about the dangers in the timing of his leadership bid.

The vice-marshal's successor, Air Marshal Bill Ratten

who also takes over as the new air commander in the Gulf tomorrow, also dismissed any suggestion of morale being affected by the contest. "The services are trained to follow whatever the political directive may be and that is precisely what they will do," he said.

The claims by the two senior officers were seen in diplomatic circles as a determined attempt to try to prevent President Saddam Hussein from profiting from the bid to topple Mrs Thatcher. They were also considered by reporters, who have conducted interviews with British servicemen and women, as an accurate assessment of their general attitude.

Mr King, a loyal Thatcherite, made his remarks prior to leaving for a tour of the Middle East which ended on Wednesday. While in Saudi Arabia, he attempted to deny he had made allegations about the dangers to troop morale, but the denials were rejected by political observers in London who said he had been attempting to deter Mr Heseltine by playing the Gulf card.

Asked if the contest would be a distraction to the 16,000 British personnel in the Gulf, Vice-Marshal Wilson said: "No, I do not think it will have an effect on morale or anything else. We are here to do a job and we will do what is asked of us. You are much more in the picture about what is going on in the political scene than we are."

Asked if the contest would weaken the capability of the British forces lined up against Iraq, he said: "I have heard that argument advanced and I do not think so personally."

He said that most of the

personnel serving in the British contingent felt remote from the leadership contest.

"Of course, they are watching it, they listen to the radio. But they are not as well informed or as interested probably as many people back home because they have got their operational job to do and that must come first," he said.

"I think one of the important things about this crisis is that it has had a bipartisan approach across all three parties," he said. "I cannot believe that this will not be a continuing policy regardless of what happens in England and certainly I understand we have the British public behind what we are doing."

On the Gulf conflict, Vice-Marshal Wilson said that because of the continuing build up of multinational forces he was now more confident than in August that President Saddam would pull out of Kuwait voluntarily.

"There is no doubt at all that he is going to lose this conflict if it comes to one."

Wilson: support across parties for Gulf mission

Bush urged to halt military build-up

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

ANOTHER senior Democratic senator yesterday sharply condemned the new US military build-up in the Gulf, just one day after President Bush told congressional leaders that Iraq was seizing on such criticism as evidence of crumbling US resolve.

Bill Bradley, a possible presidential candidate, said that with last week's decision to nearly double US troop strength in the Gulf, Mr Bush had changed to a "go-it-alone strategy" that "imperilled the international coalition he assembled so skillfully."

Writing in *The New York Times*, Senator Bradley demanded that Mr Bush suspend the new deployment, and Congress withhold funding for it, until he justified the downgrading of the "promising strategy of patient pressure" through sanctions.

"Time was on our side. Then President Bush decided to give up on time and gamble on brute strength. He decided on an empty, costly show of force that is either bluff or a prelude to war."

What President Saddam Hussein saw was growing dissonance. "Now, with more troops but less unity, more tanks but less patience, we all but invite him to call our bluff."

Such criticism, echoing that of other congressmen last weekend, infuriates Mr Bush because he believes it undermines his attempts to persuade President Saddam that the US is utterly serious about using military force to free Kuwait if it has to.

The administration thinks the Iraqi leader will not withdraw until he is convinced the alternative is war, and that was a principal consideration behind Mr Bush's decision to

order the new deployment. At a White House meeting with congressional leaders on Wednesday, Mr Bush produced a bundle of translations of Iraqi news stories which had seized on statements by Daniel Moynihan, a Democrat, Richard Lugar, a Republican, and others, suggesting Mr Bush was rushing the country to war. Mr Bush appealed for caution in public statements.

Jesse Helms, a conservative Republican senator, said later that the congressional dissonance was enough to elicit "handshakes of joy" from President Saddam. James Baker, the US Secretary of State, told reporters that the executive and legislative branches had "a mutual responsibility... not to send mixed signals."

In a move which would itself undercut congressional opposition to military action and increase pressure on Baghdad, Mr Baker departed yesterday for a trip to Europe during which he will be pressing UN Security Council members to quickly approve a resolution authorising the use of force as a last resort.

He is to lobby the foreign ministers of at least nine of the 15 council members in Paris or Geneva, including those of Zaire, Ethiopia, the Ivory Coast, Finland and Romania, before flying on to Colombia.

Mr Bush will press the matter with the Soviet, French and British leaders at the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe being held in Paris. The support of nine nations, including the five permanent members, is necessary.

Mr Abulhasan said the records would be delivered to the United Nations when the resolution was adopted. Western diplomats supported the scheme. "It seems to us a very good idea," said the US ambassador, Thomas R. Pickering.

The text of Kuwait's resolution "condemns the attempts by Iraq to alter the demographic composition of the population of Kuwait and to destroy the civil records maintained by the legitimate government of Kuwait."

Baghdad denounces US troop exercise

Dhahran — The United States yesterday launched a beach-attack exercise involving hundreds of troops, 16 warships and 1,100 aircraft in a move denounced by Baghdad as a warlike provocation (Reuters reports). All branches of the American military, including about 1,000 marines, are involved in the operation.

The six-day international amphibious exercise, ominously called "Operation Imminent Thunder", began in eastern Saudi Arabia, the US military said. The precise location of the exercise, the fourth since the multinational military deployment began in Saudi Arabia, was not given.

Iraq said on Wednesday that the staging of the exercise by US Marines near Kuwait was provocative and proved that Washington was preparing for war. "This is a clear provocative act that exposes, besides much other evidence, the American aggressive intentions against Iraq," an official spokesman was reported as saying by the Iraqi News Agency.

"Iraq believes in its right and its just cause... and is capable of responding with firmness to any aggression," the spokesman said. The US Defence Department said the move was not intended to provoke Iraqi forces into war. "A US Navy spokesman said that, for the first time, Saudi military units would also take part in exercises. He added that he did not know why the exercise, which will end next Wednesday, was held in Saudi Arabia. Neither the location nor the name was meant to provoke or threaten Iraq."

Secrecy plea

Tokyo — Japanese companies supplying the multinational force in the Gulf have asked the government to keep their names secret after receiving threatening letters, apparently from Iraq. Baghdad has repeatedly denounced Japan for joining the alliance against Iraq and some firms fear that being identified as a supplier may threaten the safety of colleagues being held hostage by Iraq.

Chinese denial

Peking — The foreign ministry here has denied that Qian Qichen, the foreign minister, discussed its position on UN resolutions on the use of force against Iraq with President Saddam Hussein when they met earlier this week in Baghdad. The denial was in response to reports that Mr Qian had told President Saddam that China would not veto a UN resolution allowing the use of force.

Arab plea to UN

Rabat — The League of Arab States has appealed to the United Nations to impose sanctions on Iraq for failing to abide by UN resolutions on the Palestinian question in the Middle East. The league asked the UN in a communique to apply to Israel Article 7 of the United Nations Charter, which calls for sanctions in the event that resolutions of the UN are not respected. (AFP)

Arafat warning

Paris — President Saddam Hussein could hold out for three years if war broke out, says Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman. He also told the magazine *L'Express* that he had been an emissary to Baghdad before the release last month of French hostages in Iraq and occupied Kuwait. Mr Arafat said Kuwaiti oilfields were mined and Saudi oilfields were within striking range of Iraq. (Reuters)

Icon 'cries' peace

New York — People are flocking to see a Greek Orthodox icon that reportedly began shedding tears last month after a special prayer service for peace in the Middle East. The icon of St Irene, patron saint of peace at the St Irene Chrysosvalantou church in the suburb of Astoria, has drawn 100,000 viewers. (AP)

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Computer Systems Ltd

Kuwaitis smuggle out key data

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

COMPUTER discs recording details of Kuwait's entire pre-invasion population have been smuggled out through the desert and are now in New York, where Kuwaiti diplomats are hoping to lodge them with the United Nations to prevent Iraq from repopulating the country.

The 25 discs contain the names and fingerprints of the 1.75 million Kuwaiti and foreign nationals who lived in the emirate before the Iraqi invasion.

The discs represent the heart of a sophisticated population register kept on a mainframe computer at the Civil Information Authority in Kuwait City, and linked to the ministries of health and planning. A day after the Iraqi

attack on August 2, the discs were hidden by workers at the centre and two weeks later were smuggled through the desert to Saudi Arabia. They arrived in New York this week.

Kuwait's ambassador to the United Nations, Mohammad Abulhasan, has asked the UN Security Council to direct the secretary-general to take custody of the discs to prevent Iraq erasing all traces of the Kuwaiti population. "We have discovered from the first two weeks of the Iraqi aggression that there is a deliberate plan for changing the demographic status of Kuwait by destroying records," he said.

Kuwaiti officials estimate that since the invasion around 400,000 of the 700,000 cit-

izens of Kuwait, as well as hundreds of thousands of foreign nationals, have been forced to flee the country and that Iraq has resettled up to 200,000 Iraqis.

Mr Abulhasan said that the records would help "to differentiate between the Kuwaitis and the non-Kuwaitis" when the confrontation was over, and might be the basis for compensation claims. Kuwait's computer system was linked with hospitals and airports, so even newborn babies and new arrivals would be on record, Mr Abulhasan said.

Mr Abulhasan began circulating the text of a proposed resolution on Wednesday which would call on the UN secretary-general, Javier Pérez de Cádiz, to take possession

of a copy of the tapes for safekeeping. The secretary-general and Kuwait's government would establish rules on access and use of the population registry, the text of the proposed resolution says.

Mr Abulhasan said the records would be delivered to the United Nations when the resolution was adopted. Western diplomats supported the scheme. "It seems to us a very good idea," said the US ambassador, Thomas R. Pickering.

The text of Kuwait's resolution "condemns the attempts by Iraq to alter the demographic composition of the population of Kuwait and to destroy the civil records maintained by the legitimate government of Kuwait."

Not poised to go ahead for Kenyan reform plan

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When it's flip to talk turtle

Philip Howard

Cowabunga. There's glory for you. Or rather, there's a nice knock-down word to introduce a piece in *The Times* and shock the grave-faced founding editors whose portraits look down on our labours, not always, I fear, with approval. Approval is not the main function of an editor. But when the children in the primary school outside the gates of the word laboratory start shouting "cowabunga" at each other, the time has come to prick up one's ears, and ask what is going on. It doesn't sound like Urdu.

It isn't. For readers over 12, the strange word is the war cry and slogan of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, the craze that has swept across America like a stoked tsunami (a huge wave) and is washing through the playgrounds of the East End, encouraged by the merchandisers who recognise that a fast buck can be made from such fads. They spent millions renaming the creatures Hero Turtles rather than Ninja Turtles for Britain, on the grounds that (a) we don't know what Ninja means, and (b) the bloody martial art is deemed inappropriate for children.

Predictably, cool kids in the south of England have found out, and call them Ninja Turtles, defiantly. In the north, the Turtles remain Heroes - another example of our own cultural insularity. The language is Surfpeak, the international lingo of surfers from Bondi to Malibu, and it takes its vocabulary from all quarters. Tsunami, the awesome wave that surfers wait for, is an inaccurate rendering of the Japanese *tsu* (harbour) and *nami* (waves).

Cowabunga is not so straightforward. It was adopted by Australian surfers in the Sixties as an exclamation of delight and drawing attention to oneself at the beginning of a ride. The word's ultimate origin seems to have been *Howdy Dooday*, a children's television programme in the Fifties, in which "Cowabunga" was the greeting exchanged by Buffalo Bob and Chief Thunderthud. It was broadcast to the world by the "Gidget" surf films, and then by the influential *Peanuts* comic strip. Now that the Teenage Mutant Ninja/Hero Turtles have adopted it, there seems to be no stopping the word.

Surfing is a solitary sport, like so many today, such as windsurfing, and (the ultimate in narcissistic solipsism) jogging. As such, more than most sports, it needs a private slang to act as a shibboleth to distinguish between surfers and profane scoffers at their mystery. Surfpeak is a pungent blend of two of the richest wells of slang in English, Californian and Oz. If the surfer rides with his right foot forward he is a goofy-footer. If he chooses to zig-zag across the face of a wave he "hot-dogs", and if he walks to the bow of the board and puts five or ten toes over the edge,

then he is "hanging five" or "tea". Like all argots, Surfpeak is designed to be exclusive.

Surfing attracts its share of groupies and hangers-on, who need to be put in their place. Non-surfers are noes; learners are wannabees; and a bodad is defined as, "a surfer who rarely goes into the water but still talks, acts and dresses as if he were a minor god of the sport". A bodad is much the same as a blowhard, or a wise guy, or a wimp: somebody who claims knowledge and authority he or she does not possess. As with most slang, the origin is obscure folk etymology, but bodad probably comes from another surfing cry of triumph, just before he is dumped in the foam, goofy over pluto. Even chaps who don't know the difference between a goofy foot and a natural can swank like thrashers (surfing show-offs).

Significantly, many of the images are religious. A great ride is said to be like going to church, or visiting "in the People's living room". A great wave (or an attractive woman) is said to surfers to be "just like death". The jargon extends to the louche aspects of beach-party existence. Vomiting is "talking to the seals".

Surfpeak, which in California dates back to the dear, dim Sixties when the Beach Boys really were boys and before they lost their hair, has arrived in Wapping. But can it really take on here? The difference between what children actually like reading and what their parents would like them to read has always been wide. They wanted us to read *Swallows and Amazons* or *The Eagle*. We preferred rougher literature, mainly to prove our independence.

But the great gulf fixed between parents' and children's ideas of a good read has seldom been wider than today. The fad magazines are a strange new world. Please do not write to me about *Prime Time*, tucked in the Saturday Review. If you feel like writing, it is not meant for you. All slang is ephemeral. That is the point of slang. The new generation always wants to create its own. But I have a hunch that Surfpeak will not stick in Wapping for long. For one thing, a trip to the seaside (a word unknown in American) means paddling in the murky at Southend with one's trousers rolled up, not visiting with the Pope on a tidal wave. And for another, turtles are not native creatures here, except in soup.

Much of what the Teenage Turtles get up to goes straight back to the tales of chivalry, and they are usefully free of human racial characteristics. But they fail Norman Tebbit's test. Not only do they not shout for England, they clearly don't even know what cricket is. (Nor, to judge by her use of it as metaphor, does the prime minister.) But their cry of cowabunga has the mad magic of poetry to last. Cowabunga.

...and moreover

ALAN COREN

There's not a lot of things Michael Caine doesn't know, but I am willing to bet that one of them is that a cigar-box holds exactly 27. In fact, I am willing to bet £7 that he doesn't. I know where I can lay my hands on that precise sum. You will say hang on, he might just say that he knows, and how can you prove that he doesn't? If you do, I shall reply that if he does know, he will also know how much a cigar-box containing 27 weights, because if you knew the one you would know the other. There's not a lot of people know that.

I single out Mr Caine for this public wager not simply because he is the national repository of statistical arcane, but also because he is a cigar-smoker, and I am a gambler. True gamblers take no pleasure in racing certainties; they prefer to give a sucker an even break, else where's the thrill? Though there is only a remote possibility that Michael hangs on to his old cigar-boxes, and an even remoter one that, when he empties his trouser-pockets of an evening, he throws his copper coins into one of them, a possibility there is.

After all, I do. Or, more precisely, I have been doing for the past year. I started because I had an empty cigar-box, and I find it impossible to throw away an empty cigar-box. Nothing looks more useful. Nothing might come in handier. In consequence, I now have a large number of full cigar-boxes, in which I keep things that are less useful than cigar-boxes, and might otherwise have been thrown away. There is, for example, one full of useless bolts, and another full of blotless nuts, a pleasing symmetry of uselessness lying at the bottom of the tea-chest in which I keep all my cigar-boxes. It was a big day when the tea-chest arrived. Unable to throw away such a useful-looking item, I stared at it for a long time before I suddenly realised that it was the best thing there was for keeping cigar-boxes in.)

Last November, my latest cigar-box fell vacant; but I had nothing to put in it. My single cuff-links, my old watch-straps, my huge collection of two-pin plugs, sidelined by rewiring,

which would be invaluable if we were ever re-wired, all these and more already had their boxes. And then I remembered that my bedside drawer was full of pennies.

Not only did they look wonderful in their new box, they represented a major breakthrough. Individually useless, they would become useful by agglomeration: never had a cigar-box been handier. I do not think I have ever spent a happier year.

Nor ended one as unhappily. Two days ago, I tried to add a pocketful of copper, but the box wouldn't take it. It was time to top up. I emptied it onto the kitchen table, and made little piles of ten. They came, remarkably, to exactly 70. Who would have thought that seven quid could look so much? I scooped them back in the box, and drove to the bank.

There I stood in the queue with my cigar-box. When I got to the window, the teller looked at it. He looked at me. He did not start talking.

"There's seven pounds," I said.

"You'll have to bag it," he said. He slid seven little bags under his window. "Next," he said.

It is not easy, sitting at a table in a bank and counting out a cigarboxful of pennies. Who is this person? say the passing eyes. An undemanding beggar? A talentless busker? A bogus child cashing up after *Guy Fawkes* week? Or just a poor sod down on his luck? Used to smoke *Romeo y Julietas*, but look at him now; it's a lesson to us all, no wonder Thatcher's on the way out.

Eventually, the teller put my seven bags on the scales. That is how I know what they weighed. That is how he knew what one of them didn't.

"There's only 99p in this," he said.

Or possibly, said the eyes, *Britain's pettiest crook?*

I found it on the carpet, after a pleasant grovel, and the teller told the seven ones. My stake, Michael, if you're betting. Of course, you could always cheat by nipping up the bank with a boxful of coin to find out what it weighs, but take it from me, it isn't worth it.

Vernon Bogdanor on the fate of prime ministers who fail the test of collective responsibility

Power must be shared—or is lost

One of Michael Heseltine's complaints against Mrs Thatcher is that she has abused the procedures of cabinet government, that decisions which ought to be taken collectively are made by prime ministerial fiat or in bilateral negotiations with individual ministers. Mr Heseltine's resignation in January 1986 over the Westland affair was not, as is commonly supposed, because he could not agree with a collective cabinet decision, but because, in his view, the prime minister's misuse of the machinery of government prevented him from putting his case to his cabinet colleagues for collective judgment.

The doctrine of collective responsibility, which lies at the heart of cabinet government, is difficult to isolate with any accuracy. In particular, it is never quite clear at what stage the process of policy formation has come to an end, and the cabinet is collectively committed to a particular policy. However, collective responsibility requires collective decision-making. No minister need feel obliged to follow a policy when he has been given no chance to discuss it beforehand. Superficially, it seems

a prime minister can gain enormous power by manipulating the cabinet; in practice, attempts to do so tend to rebound horribly.

Only once this century has a sitting prime minister been overthrown in peacetime. Lloyd George in 1922. Like Mrs Thatcher, he was accused of abusing the procedures of cabinet government, in particular, of conducting his own foreign policy - friendship with Russia, support for Greece against Turkey - which the cabinet had rejected. On October 4, 1922, Curzon, the Foreign Secretary, complained to him that there were in reality two Foreign Offices, and "whereas I report not only to you but to all my colleagues everything that I say or do, it is often only by accident that I hear what is being done by the other FO". Privately, Curzon remarked that Lloyd George "wants his Foreign Secretary to be a valet, almost a drudge".

On domestic affairs, the prime minister used the cabinet committee system to isolate opponents and ensure support for his views. "Mr Lloyd George", Winston Churchill complained, "had a habit of picking his colleagues for

any preliminary discussions so as to have a working majority of those who were favourable to his view." When the secretary of state for India, Edwin Montagu, resigned in March 1922, he declared that while Lloyd George was a genius, his government had seen "the total, complete, absolute disappearance of the doctrine of cabinet responsibility".

Yet, despite the cavalier way Lloyd George treated his cabinet, all but three members remained loyal to him at the famous Carlton Club meeting of Conservative MPs, which took the decision to break with the coalition and in effect to remove the prime minister. Disaffection began, and then spread to the backbenches. "My experience", said Bonar Law, who had played the leading role in the overthrow of Lloyd George, "is that all prime ministers suffer by suppression. Their friends do not tell them the truth; they tell them what they want to hear."

Only one other peacetime prime minister has sought to extend the powers of the office beyond their natural limits. Lloyd George's great

enemy, Neville Chamberlain. From the time he took office in May 1937, he determined, like Lloyd George, to take control of foreign policy into his own hands, and away from his Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden.

Of his own first major foreign policy speech, opposing continued sanctions against Italy, he wrote in his diary: "I did not consult Anthony Eden, because he would have been bound to beg me not to say what I proposed." In January 1938, he rejected a proposal by President Roosevelt for an international conference on European problems without consulting Eden or the cabinet. In the words of one minister, "The cabinet as a whole learnt of the president's message only when the whole matter was past history." Chamberlain's policies were to reach their culmination in the Munich Agreement that autumn, which was bitterly opposed by most of the foreign policy professionals.

Under our unwritten constitution, no one has ever sought to define the position of the prime minister, whose formal powers are very great. They include the power to appoint and dismiss

ministers, to determine the composition of committees and sub-committees, and, to some extent, to control the cabinet agenda. These powers, however, have one vital constraint: the prime minister must retain the confidence of senior colleagues in pursuing policies agreed at cabinet level. As the examples of Lloyd George and Chamberlain show, if that constraint is overridden then the system breaks down, making the prime minister's position untenable.

Lloyd George, declared Baldwin in 1922, "is a dynamic force, and it is from that very fact that our troubles... arise. A dynamic force is a very terrible thing; it may crush you, and it is not necessarily right." Nobody could be less like Michael Heseltine than Baldwin, the quietly-spoken, rather lethargic man who played a central role in removing Lloyd George, in 1922. But those words of his at the Carlton Club nearly 60 years ago must send a shiver down the spine of Mrs Thatcher's supporters as she too comes to realise the limitations of prime ministerial power.

The author is a fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford.

Keep it up, Mr Gorbachev, but don't forget the Gulag

Bernard Levin, reopening the case of an innocent man held prisoner for ten years in a Siberian labour camp, finds the powers of the KGB untrammelled

Mr Gorbachev must be a very busy man. With one hand he is trying to stop his country breaking into pieces, and with the other to prevent his people starving. If he had three hands, the third would be employed in placating Mr Yeltsin, and if he had a fourth, he would use it to calm the Ukrainian students. The fifth would ascend to the right of the worthless rouble, the sixth would be spent arguing with Professor Shatalin, the seventh would be concerned with the numbers of his citizens who want to leave their country for ever, the eighth would be busy worrying what the Red Army high command will say when he tells them that they must reduce the numbers under arms by 90 per cent, the ninth would be used in doing much the same to the bureaucracy, and the tenth would be occupied in trying to persuade his cynical citizens that they will ultimately benefit from his Nobel peace prize.

What I want to know is: if he had eleven hands, would he be the eleventh to examine the case of Adolf Borisovich Gorbiz?

I wrote about Mr Gorbiz some six months ago; I shall start with a brief reminder of who he is. In 1977 Mr Gorbiz applied to be allowed to leave the Soviet Union. His application was refused, as were all his subsequent applications. No reason was ever given (he had never had anything to do with secret work), and eventually the KGB arrested him on wholly spurious charges, and had him convicted in a gross parody of a trial and sentenced to 10 years' imprisonment in the most severe category, called "strict regime". The KGB was particularly vicious in Mr Gorbiz's case, because it wanted him to accuse other people, as innocent as himself, but he steadfastly refused. You thought the Gulag had finally been dismantled? You were wrong. Here is an excerpt from the

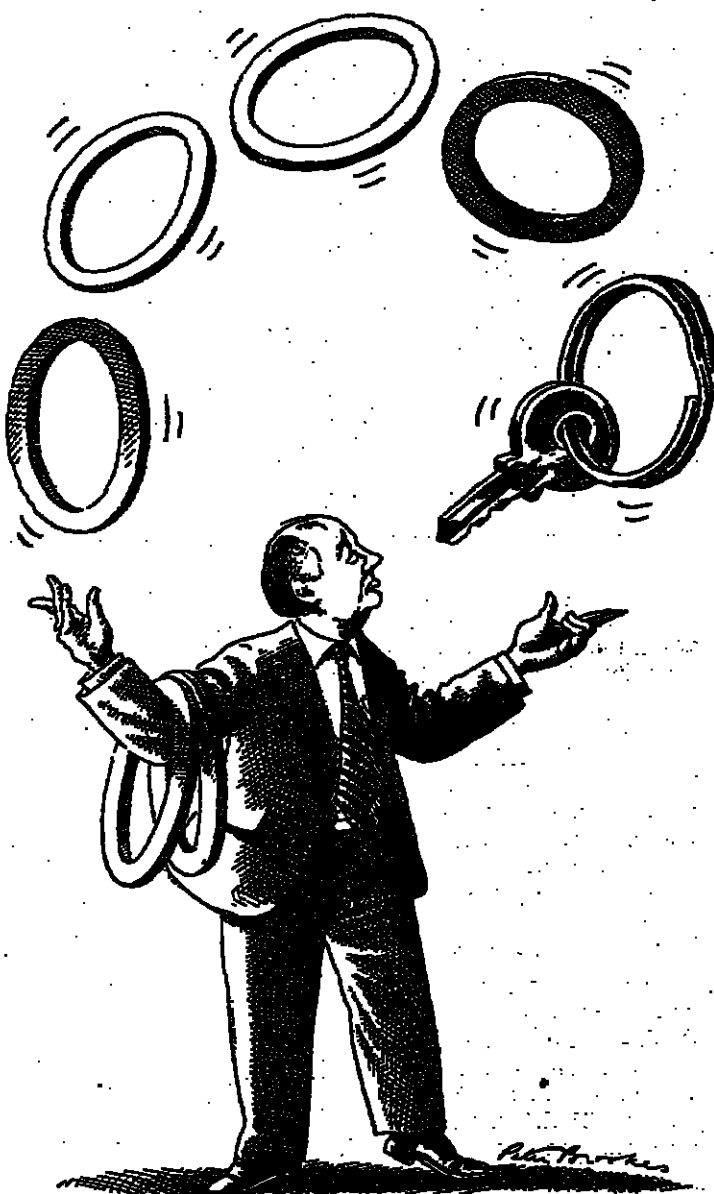
latest letter of his I have seen, written from his Siberian labour camp to a friend in Britain:

For ten years I have been suffering moral and physical torture, and at the present time heavy physical labour, disgusting food, inhuman conditions and a severe climate where it drops to -60 Celsius... The ground here for many scores of miles is covered in permanent frost and ice. When a construction team, diggers by hand, using picks and sledge-hammers, to make holes for building foundations, digs up only little scraps of ice and frozen soil, it will give you some small idea of what are the inhuman working conditions and the superhuman strength that is needed for the prisoners here...

You are helping me in these extreme conditions of permanent cold and lawlessness to acquire and maintain my human dignity in my everlasting struggle with this enormous state machine and its repressive secret police organs... Just a little patience and time and people will learn the truth. The firmness and strength of spirit in the fight against state terrorism, for sovereignty and freedom, that your prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, is showing, is a cause for rejoicing throughout the world for this strong-willed wonderful woman... Do write to me.

As I said when I first wrote about this dreadful case, no one can expect Mr Gorbachev to know about every instance of the criminal behaviour of the KGB. The Soviet ambassador to Britain would certainly have read my previous article, and will read this, but he will just as certainly not bother his master with the plight of Mr Gorbiz, not least because his own position has now, quite justly, become precarious.

I put it like that because, as I said in my earlier account, "one glance at the Gorbiz file by Mr Gorbachev would be enough for him to see that the entire case was fraudulent"; he would not need



more than five minutes to see the injustice, and for that matter, not more than two minutes to give orders that the wrong must at once be righted.

Mr Gorbachev, it is true, has a monstrous problem with the KGB. For decades it has, in effect, run the country; its tentacles have reached everywhere, the opening of its secret archives would be enough to have three-quarters of the country's apparatuses' reaching for the cyanide, and its power, somewhat diminished but still

enormous, makes it quite possible that if Mr Gorbachev locked horns with it, he might well lose the encounter.

That, obviously, is a risk he will not run until he is reasonably sure of victory. With so much at stake, the case of Adolf Gorbiz would bulk small even if he heard about it. But by the same token, his freeing this entirely innocent man would hardly rock his throne, let alone topple it.

It is very difficult for us to understand the magnitude of what

is happening in the Soviet Union; ironically enough, it resembles nothing so much as the last days of the Romanovs, and any minute now, the roads will be full of holy men, wandering the land and proclaiming the end of time. A less dramatic picture reveals a man, with few allies to help him or even trust him, trying to cleanse the Augean stables not by diverting a river through them but with - his only resource - a leaky bucket. By now, in the offices of the bureaucracy, something like anarchy must be reigning; chains of command have long since snapped, the rule is every man for himself, orders dribble away into the sand long before they reach the desk, they are directed to, chaos is come again.

It is said that when the Bastille was stormed at the beginning of the French Revolution, a very old prisoner was found, but neither he nor his jailers could say who he was, much less why he was in there. Something like that is, I should think, becoming the norm not just in prisons and camps, but throughout the entire Soviet system. Every cupboard bulges with skeletons, and when the staff go home (assuming they have bothered to turn up in the first place) the skeletons come out and dance.

Contemplating such disaster, I feel only compassion for Mr Gorbachev, though more for his cold, hungry, cheated country. Scifful juggler though he is, the number of coloured rings he is striving to keep in the air will sooner or later be beyond him, if only because more and more rings are being flung at him daily. Before he drops the lot, could he not perform one act of truth, compassion and justice for Adolf Gorbiz?

Later I have just seen another letter that Mr Gorbiz sent to his friend. In a reference to the KGB, he says:

...its most extreme form is still operative, and the Soviet officers in this system have no knowledge of the word or the feeling of pity, nor do they have any feeling of guilt at the ill-treatment that they have committed and are committing even now; they have created the most cruel, bloody system... Only belief in God can sustain one in these conditions. Our God is with us and will help us.

Not even a quick single...

Although it must go against the grain of her conservative nature, Mrs Thatcher is heeding the advice of her advisers to keep a low profile in the run-up to Tuesday's leadership election. While interviewers lap up words from Michael Heseltine, the prime minister has been uncharacteristically silent since her Guildhall remark on Monday that hostile bowling would be hit "all around the ground".

Heseltine's office calculates that within 24 hours of announcing his candidature, he had given more than 50 television, radio and newspaper interviews. Requests for more are pouring in from all over the world, and all but those from the most obscure are being granted. The Thatcher camp, by contrast, says it has turned down over 100 requests for press and broadcasting interviews with the prime minister. Instead it is relying on such lieutenants as Norman Tebbit and Sir George Younger to defend her record.

Media heavyweights think the Thatcher strategy is probably the correct one. David Dimbleby says of her low-key approach: "It's exactly the same as the campaign she conducted when she won the leadership in 1975. She personally telephoned the producers of *Panorama* the night before the second ballot, when all the other candidates had agreed to take part, to say that her advisers said she should not. She was upset about it, but she didn't participate."

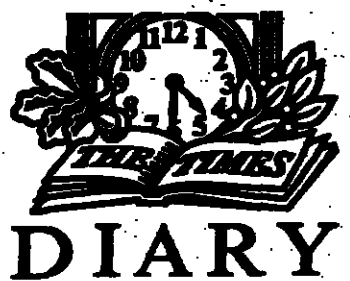
However, should the first ballot prove inconclusive, Dimbleby

suspects that she will come out with all guns blazing. "Her instinct is for a fight and if it goes to a second ballot I think she will alter her strategy and give a big television interview," he says hopefully. Brian Walden, who had a memorable showdown with Mrs Thatcher only days after Nigel Lawson's resignation, says: "You could argue that one distinguished performance by Mrs Thatcher might solidify her position, but I suspect she has got it right by not engaging in a toe-to-toe battle with her challenger. She feels that would make him equal in status."

The BBC, required by its charter to show impartiality, has taken to ending its interviews with Heseltine with an explanatory note: "The prime minister's candidature as an area of outstanding natural beauty Tony Patterson, an old Wykehamist who is among the leading objects to the plan, says the school has reneged on the terms on which the land was bequeathed to it in 1935. 'The land was bought by two dons in 1922 to prevent it being developed. The spirit of their bequest is that it should be safeguarded in perpetuity. Instead, the college proposes to cooperate in this obscenity.'"

College road

In the latest twist to the row over the Department of Transport's plan to put a motorway through Twyford Down, Winchester College has been accused of a breach of trust over its failure to resist a compulsory purchase order on the land, designated as an area of outstanding natural beauty. Tony Patterson, an old Wykehamist who is among the leading objects to the plan, says the school has reneged on the terms on which the land was bequeathed to it in 1935. "The land was bought by two dons in 1922 to prevent it being developed. The spirit of their bequest is that it should be safeguarded in perpetuity. Instead, the college proposes to cooperate in this obscenity."



John Broadway, a former mayor of Winchester and godson of Maurice Plummer, one of those who gave the land to the college, agrees. He says Plummer would have hated the plan and would have supported Patterson and his fellow protestors, who favour a tunnel under the Down.

The college has a different interpretation. The bursar, Robin Chute, says: "In an ideal world we would favour the tunnel, but we have to strike a balance. We are not breaking any trust in selling the land. It was left for the benefit of the boys of the school. It is up to the headmaster whether the proceeds of its sale are used to give them a holiday in the Himalayas or to buy extra Latin primers."

Some sommelier

David Mellor, the arts minister, is prepared to reward artists wherever he finds them, however arcane the form. Including, for example, the dazzling virtuoso performance by Valentino Monticello, chief sommelier at Harry's Bar in Mayfair, whenever he draws a cork or tops up a glass.

That, however, is not Monticello's only artistic ability. He has just assembled an exhibition - his first - of collages of wine bottle labels. Hearing of it, Mellor insisted that he conduct the opening ceremony at the Ergon Gallery, which had to rearrange dates to enable him to fit in.

Wine bottles apart, the two men are on the same artistic wavelength. "We share a love of music and opera," says Monticello. And both are devoted to Harry's Bar, a members-only restaurant that

government has slashed its state subsidy by three-quarters, making 2,100 employees redundant.

The Barrandov Studio spawned such famous names as Milos Forman, director of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. The new director, Vachav Marhoul, is trying to attract foreign capital and foreign productions. Jeremy Irons is now in Prague filming Steven Soderbergh's *Kafka*, and there are hopes that Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* will be shot there next summer.

But perhaps Havel's lack of sympathy for the film people is not surprising. Despite its artistic successes, much of the studio's output consisted of building-the-workers-republic films. It is said that under the old regime, some of the 40 full-time directors made only one film every three years, while Havel, because of his "subversive" activities, had to work as a low-paid labourer in a brewery.

With the Conservative party at war over Europe, Labour only narrowly avoided an embarrassment over the same issue on Wednesday night. As MPs went into the division lobbies on a Liberal Democrat amendment welcoming closer integration in Europe, Neil Kinnock was locked in conversation with Sir David Steel, the former Liberal leader. Labour was abstaining on the vote.

Kinnock, engrossed in their talk, walked with Steel straight to the entrance of the eye lobby. A gaffe was prevented only when a Labour whip, posted outside like a sentry, grabbed his leader's arm and asked him where he thought he was going.

هنا من الأمل

Moi poised to give go-ahead for Kenyan reform plan

By MICHAEL KNIFE, DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

PRESIDENT Moi of Kenya is expected to approve significant constitutional reform within the next few days. Informed sources say the Kenyan leader, who has just returned to Nairobi after attending the enthronement of Emperor Akihito of Japan, will give his blessing to key recommendations made by a 19-man committee of the ruling Kamb party, chaired by George Saitoti, the vice-president.

The Saitoti report is understood to recommend scrapping three controversial constitutional practices. These are: "queue-voting", where supporters line up publicly behind their candidates at the preliminary stage of voting; a rule enabling candidates to avoid the formality of a secret ballot if they appear to have 70 per cent of the voters lined up behind them; and the practice of expelling rebels from the party, which inhibits free debate and results in various constituencies having no representation.

Because of the extent of Western aid and investment and its largely pro-Western policies, Kenya's one-party political system and its human rights record have attracted extensive criticism in the West.

Some Kenyan officials complain that Washington and London expect more of Kenya than they do of less Western-orientated African states. Certainly, any constitutional reforms will be welcomed by the Nairobi government's aid and trade partners.

President Moi is expected initially to indicate privately his approval of the reforms, say the sources. Within a matter of days, they will be formally discussed, first by the national executive committee of the ruling party and then by a party delegates' conference.

In spite of the pressures internally and from the West, the sources believe that the Saitoti report is unlikely to embrace political pluralism, which the Kenyan government believes would simply be a recipe for tribal division. President Moi is not ruling out some form of plural democracy in the future, say the sources, but merely insisting that it be adopted at a time of Kenya's choosing and not as a result of international pressure. The Saitoti committee is understood to abide by this judgment.

As the committee toured the country between June and August, sounding out opinion, it generated unprecedented public expressions of dissent. Its hearings provided the first officially sanctioned platform for grassroots criticism of the government since the banning of the last opposition party 21 years ago.

Scores of Kenyans complained of corrupt officialdom, election rigging, "cronyism" and the loss of constitutional freedoms, while the

committee, composed mostly of party stalwarts, came in for some criticism itself.

Concern over the human rights situation has caused the American government to withhold \$15 million (£7.9 million) in military aid, and Denmark has threatened to withdraw assistance worth \$35 million. The Nairobi government itself broke off diplomatic relations with Norway, accusing it of supporting subversion against Kenya.

The first sign of a positive response to the reformist pressure came ten days ago when President Moi directed his attorney-general to draft a bill aimed at restoring security of tenure to judges, the controller and the auditor-general. Their constitutional security of tenure had been withdrawn in 1986. The president also specifically emphasised the importance of good and open government and the rule of law. This appeared to be a direct response to public warnings from Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, that in future British aid would be conditional on such issues — particularly pertinent to Kenya, which is Britain's largest aid recipient in Africa and the second largest worldwide.



Moi ready to approve constitutional reforms



Test case: American police yesterday escorted three British Greenpeace protesters into a Las Vegas court where they were charged with trespassing on a Nevada nuclear test site. The woman, from left, Jane Gregory, Laura Richardson and Juley Howard, and Michael Perry, right, their American guide, penetrated "ground zero" and delayed a British test for two hours. They were released on bail.

Fishing limit plea angers Argentina

By ANDREW McEWEN, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

BRITAIN, in talks with Argentina, has put forward a demand by the Falkland Islands for its fishing limit to be increased from 150 to 200 miles because of over-fishing just outside the zone.

The possibility has caused a furore in Buenos Aires, which claims sovereignty over both the islands and the seabed. The opposition Radical party sees it as evidence that President Menem's policy of improving relations with Britain is flawed. Mario Campora, the Argentine ambassador in London, fears it could damage relations.

But the British move will please the islanders, who believe their future prosperity depends on it. They have been urging the government for nearly two years to increase the limit, but until now the Foreign Office has shown no interest. Its reluctance stems from fears of upsetting the improved relationship which followed the renewal of diplomatic links

Mandela pledges to defend free speech

From GAVIN BELL IN JOHANNESBURG

AFTER decades of isolation from the media, Nelson Mandela is resolved to uphold its freedom of expression in a post-apartheid society — including its right to criticise policies of the African National Congress.

Addressing the foreign correspondents' association of South Africa last night, the ANC deputy leader pledged to defend freedom of speech in all its forms. "Every political opinion, economic theory and social dogma should be subjected to rigorous scrutiny and examination," he said. "It is only in such an atmosphere of free political debate that the wisdom or otherwise of the ANC's political programme can be tested and weighed along with those of other political parties and movements."

Arguing that censorship had no place in a democratic society, he said: "The ANC does not now, nor will it ever, seek to control or arbitrarily determine how you

perform your work. We wish to see the media report the facts as they see them, without let or hindrance by the state or any political party."

Mr Mandela paid tribute to Max du Preez, the editor of the liberal Afrikaans newspaper *Vrye Weekblad*, whose disclosures of alleged murders by government security agencies led to a judicial commission of inquiry. "Mr du Preez, sprung from the very loins of Afrikanerdom and born in its heartland, the Orange Free State, has firmly nailed his colours to the mast of press freedom. For daring to espouse this universally recognised democratic principle, he has been pilloried, harassed and persecuted by the South African authorities."

The editor was fined £1,400 recently for publishing a report about the national intelligence service. He is now fighting a £200,000 libel action brought a senior police officer.

Police find two more victims of mass killer

Dunedin — Police have found the charred remains of two 11-year-old girls at the scene of Tuesday night's mass killing in New Zealand. The bodies were in a house burnt down in a fire allegedly started by the killer, David Gray. The discovery brings to 13 the number of victims of the shooting in Aramoana near Dunedin (Jeremy Hart writes).

Police yesterday released the names of all but one of the victims, among them three members of the Percy family who were caught in the gunfire while visiting the seaside village.

The village was opened for an hour to reporters, who were given a tour of the settlement set among sand dunes on the east coast. Aramoana's surviving 40 residents were staying with friends or relatives away from their village.

Most of the scientific examination of the village was centred on the stone bungalow where Gray, aged 33, lived alone. Ten of his 13 victims were found within 50 yards of his house, described by Detective Sergeant Peter Gibbons as "unkempt and not a place owned by someone who was house proud". Inside police found two 22 rifles and a large amount of ammunition "including some in the fridge". They also found a library focusing on serial killings and mercenaries.

People who knew Gray told of his mental instability and his fascination with weapons and military subjects. The owner of a bookshop in Dunedin, 16 miles from Aramoana, claimed that Gray once threatened an assistant in his shop with what appeared to be a shotgun disguised in a cardboard box.

Typhoon kills 190

Manila — Typhoon Mike has killed 190 people and left 160 others missing in central and southern Philippines. Relief agencies said more than 120,000 people were made homeless by the strongest typhoon to hit the country this year. The 100mph winds flattened more than 40,000 homes and sank 77 ships and boats. More than a million people either fled from their homes or lost some property. (Reuters)

Antigua enquiry

St John's, Antigua — The government here said Colonel Clyde Walker, commander of its security forces, would be dismissed and Vere Bird Jr, the prime minister's son, barred from cabinet office, as recommended by a commission investigating shipments of Israeli weapons to Colombian drug dealers. (Reuters)

Roof-top sex risk

Istanbul — A Turkish doctor has issued a health warning to people who like to have sex on the roof of their house to take care not to fall off. "Many couples in rural Turkey sleep on the roof on hot summer nights," said Dr Askin Karadayi. "Some fall off as they slumber and some fall as they are making love," he told *Hurriyet* newspaper. About a dozen people are killed and many injured in this way each summer. (Reuters)

Thirties blues sweep America's Third World city

From CHARLES BREMNER IN NEW YORK

A TOURIST from Hungary dipped into his pockets on the steps of St Patrick's cathedral on Fifth Avenue last Tuesday lunchtime and pulled out a quarter. He handed it to a beggar who had accosted him with New York's current refrain: "Spare any change, please?"

"They all seem so poor," said Bela Vali from Budapest, one of the thousands of foreigners who are profiting from the slump in the dollar to taste the delights of America's Third World city. The same lunchtime, hundreds of

peddlers with trinkets were plying the avenue. Around the corner, shoe-shine men were thanking customers in Japanese. Farther up Manhattan in Harlem, a queue wove its way around the block as depositors waited to retrieve savings from the Freedom National Bank, which had collapsed.

New Yorkers are switching from thoughts of recession to the term they have taken to calling the "D-word", or Depression. "Buddy can you spare a dime," that anthem of the 1930s, is playing on radio stations, and *New York* magazine has devoted an issue to discussing whether the city is about to relive the early 1930s, with its bread

queues and starving children. The sudden onset of hard times has triggered what the psychologists are calling an acute sense of foreboding in America. Amplified by the Gulf confrontation and New York's power as the media and financial capital, the gloom is sweeping the country.

"Never in US history has an economic downturn been so widely advertised and feared before it even began," *Newsweek* noted this week. *The Wall Street Journal*, the voice of the business world, argued that recession fever was pulling America into "clinical depression" and citizens were acting irrationally. For symptoms, it pointed to everything from a rush of middle-class

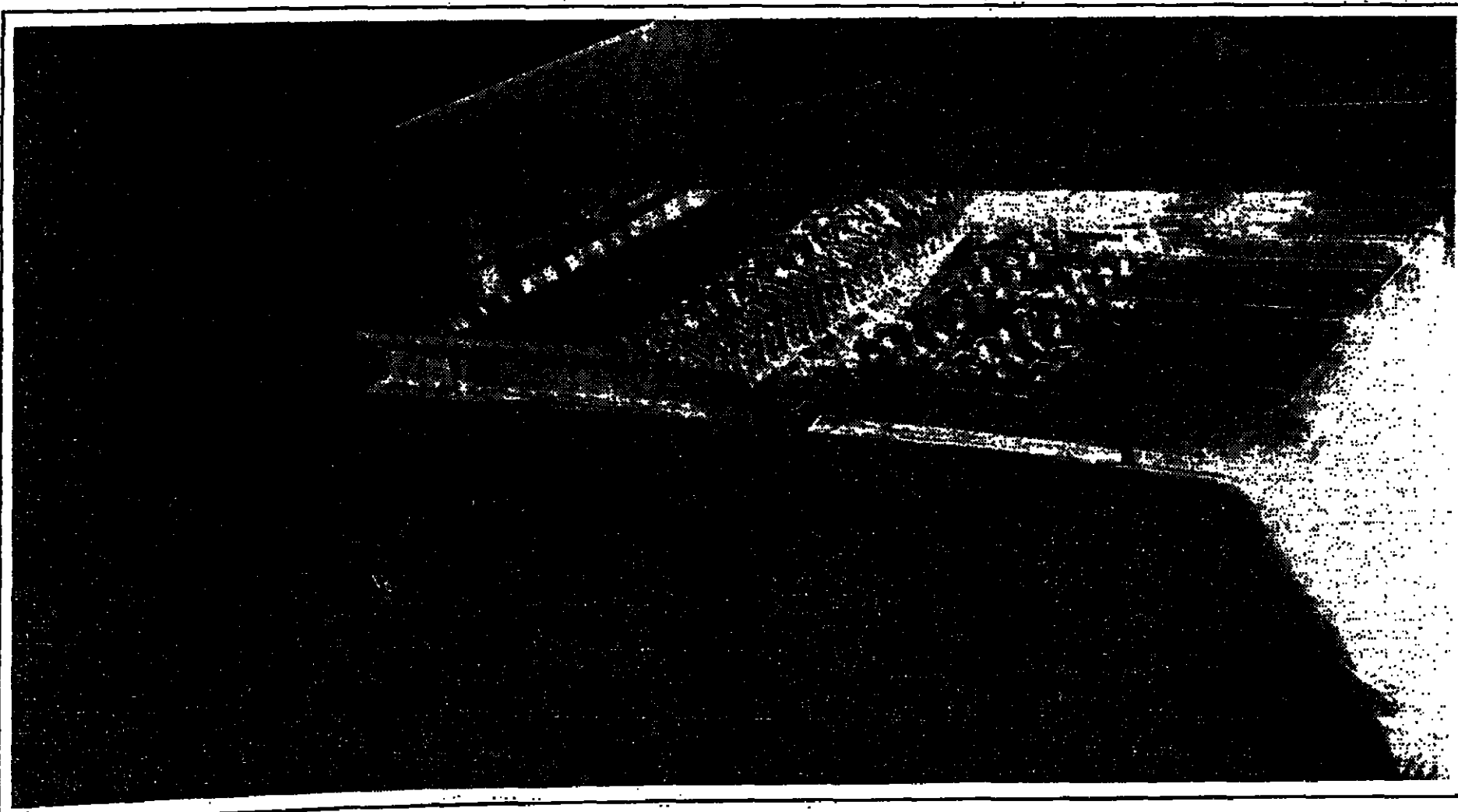
callers to the Samaritans in Boston, to a boom in tranquilisers and chocolate.

Americans in general, and New Yorkers in particular, are throwing themselves into the frugal mentality with the energy they applied so recently to having it all. Television and magazines are stuffed with advice on "strategies for survival". How do you explain to the kids that you are forced to sell the second car?

With all the dark images and bleak talk, the Hungarian could be forgiven for imagining that he had landed among a nation of paupers. But while bankruptcies are soaring and economists say

the recession has begun, there is little evidence that the country is in for more than a cyclical slump last suffered in 1982.

While the pundits ponder on the psychology, economists are becoming alarmed about the consequences for a nation that seems intent on talking itself down. If shoppers shun the department stores, already stacked for the Christmas season, the impact could be dire. Robert Mosbacher, the commerce secretary, says he believes fear of a recession could create one. Robert Reich, the Harvard economist, describes the process as a self-fulfilling prophecy. "It's as Roosevelt said: 'We have nothing to fear but fear itself.'"



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BUT CAN SHE WIN?

Michael Heseltine's claim to the Tory leadership has at its heart a simple truth: "I am persuaded that I would now have a better prospect than Mrs Thatcher of leading the Conservatives to a fourth electoral victory." The 372-strong electorate to which he is appealing, Tory members of parliament, has a straightforward interest in the outcome of the vote. The next general election will determine the jobs of probably the majority of them, jobs either as ministers or as MPs. The candidate who can claim more likely success at the polls will have most direct access to their hearts.

That candidate at present is Mr Heseltine. The latest spate of opinion polls indicate that, were he leading the party, it would make up ten points of its approximate 15 point deficit against Labour. While Tory voters overwhelmingly prefer Mrs Thatcher, the electorate as a whole, and especially centre floating voters, are more attracted to Mr Heseltine. This psephology is potent.

The simplest counter-attack is that Mrs Thatcher has been here before. Her and her party's support was even weaker in October 1981. Though none of the "wets" dared to challenge her that year, the plight of her party in the opinion polls was even more dire than it is today (27 per cent against 32 per cent). Yet within 18 months, Mrs Thatcher devastated her opponents. Likewise in the summer of 1986, Mrs Thatcher seemed on the ropes, with barely a third of the electorate professing support. Again, a year of vigorous campaigning brought her an election victory.

There were special factors to explain each recovery. The Falklands war, the Liberal/SDP alliance splitting the anti-Tory vote, Labour's leadership troubles under Michael Foot, a mini-election boom, all played their parts. But the art of politics is the art of manipulating special factors. Whatever else may be said of Mrs Thatcher, she has never shown herself a reluctant manipulator.

Even where governments have been thrown out of office at general elections, they normally do so only after seeing some considerable recovery from mid-term troubles. The Wilson government ejected in 1970 was confidently expected to win, after being written off as dead in the water in 1968. The same was true of Mr Heath in 1974, despite his troubles of 1972.

The lesson of history is to beware the lessons of history. Any politician can see that this

time a Tory recovery will be harder than in 1983 or 1987. The recession has come uncomfortably late in the election cycle. The Labour Opposition looks increasingly electable. The third-party parrot may not be dead, but it still scratches intermittently and seems to hurt the Tories more than Labour.

On the other hand, Mrs Thatcher could find hope in a successful outcome to the Gulf confrontation. The depth of the present recession offers scope for more cuts in interest rates and some electorally reviving reflation over the next year. In John Major, Mrs Thatcher has an astute Chancellor unlikely to jump ship on matters of personality or principle over the next few months.

All this merely means that the electoral prospects for Mrs Thatcher's leadership must be considered at least an open question by her MPs. While her unpopularity with the electorate remains high, it has been high for much of her period as prime minister. She retains many of the attributes highly regarded in a leader, especially a leader facing economic or foreign policy difficulties: strength, cool-headedness and, above all, experience. Her less-flattering attributes, lack of warmth and care, have not told against her in the past.

The Conservative party has long relied on unity as part of its appeal. Mr Heseltine has damaged that unity, albeit in what he regards as a necessary cause. That will not help the party, but it will not help the party whether Mr Heseltine or Mrs Thatcher is leader. Many party figures have been worried by Mrs Thatcher over the last 11 years. But, fairly or not, Mr Heseltine's assumption of power would be bitterly resented by an equal number. Mrs Thatcher can at least argue that, with Mr Heseltine beaten and silenced, a greater sense of continuity can be presented to the voters.

Conservative MPs will naturally be influenced by evidence of Mr Heseltine's electoral superiority. Against that, they need to reflect on whether the factionalism that would accompany Mr Heseltine as prime minister would cement or erode that superiority over the coming months. Mrs Thatcher is a three-time election winner. If Mr Heseltine has electability, so does she. MPs would perhaps best conclude that they should decide on grounds other than whether or not their seats or jobs are at risk. To those grounds *The Times* will turn tomorrow and next week.

Tory party leadership: Thatcher record and Heseltine prospects

From Professor Patrick Minford

Sir, In the last 11 years Mrs Thatcher's free-market reform programme has paid off massively in productivity growth, industrial profitability, falling unemployment and an end to 1970s over-inflation. The candidature of Michael Heseltine for the leadership must raise acute anxieties among those who have supported the Conservative party in this courageous programme.

Mr Heseltine espouses the corporatist policies that so conspicuously failed in the 1970s, and that are still urged on us by the Labour party. It was those very policies that gave us the over-inflation, stagnant productivity, and the profitability at one third of the OECD average. In the EC context they imply Fortress Europe, a nightmare that the Thatcher government has successfully fought so far, in the interests of all Europeans.

Conservative MPs can hardly need reminding of the dangers of going back to ideas of this sort. Yet these are the main distinguishing marks of the Heseltine platform: the party line on exchange-rate mechanism membership, preservation of economic sovereignty and modification of the community

charge. On inflation, the - in any case fallacious - argument of what might have been if we had joined the ERM in 1985 is no alternative to the tough policies now being followed.

Mrs Thatcher's free-market policies have brought her party success at three general elections. Conservative MPs must at all costs keep their nerve and support her; then the normal cycle of popular support will come to their aid as the next election approaches. Betrayal of their principles now would destroy their credibility.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK MINFORD,
University of Liverpool,
Department of Economics and Accounting,
Eleonor Rathbone Building,
PO Box 147,
Liverpool L69,
November 14.

From Mr William Powell, MP for Corby (Conservative)

Sir, Robert Peel, over the Corn Laws, and Gladstone, over Irish Home Rule, came to political grief by dividing their parties against themselves with the consequence that for most of the next generation first the Conservatives and

then the Liberals were unable to establish strong united governments.

For Mrs Thatcher the future development of Europe is proving to be a similar situation. I estimate that about 95 per cent of my colleagues are enthusiastic supporters of Mr Major's plan for the hard ecu which we see as the most constructive and practical proposal for future monetary progress in the Community. Sir Geoffrey Howe has made it quite clear that Mrs Thatcher is amongst the 5 per cent who do not. To them it is designed for the negative purpose of wrecking.

It is obvious that Mrs Thatcher cannot reunite the Conservative party. That Mr Heseltine is the cause of present troubles is absurd. Sir Geoffrey did not resign because of him, nor did Mr Lawson. Many of my colleagues believe that if she were to continue in office further debilitating resignations would result.

We all know that the die is cast and the sad fate of the magnificent Sir Robert Peel awaits Mrs Thatcher.

Yours sincerely,
WILLIAM POWELL,
House of Commons,
November 15.

From Lord Wade of Chorlton

Sir, The prime minister's approach to the European Community is entirely correct. Each country in Europe is independent and is negotiating to obtain the best terms, as they see it, for their people as the plans for the future Europe are slowly brought together.

Past experience shows that not all the other members of the Community are quite as European as they pretend. They make agreements that are not kept and set standards they never intend to keep.

The discussions on the future of the European Community and how closely united the countries of Europe will become are only now being properly understood. It will be many years before we see any practical breakdown of national barriers. They will be of great benefit to all when they come but at this stage of these negotiations it is imperative that Britain is represented by a prime minister who puts Britain's interests first.

Those MPs and others who wish to see a change of leadership of the Conservative party are completely wrong. In the economy the government has made mistakes that it understands and is now taking action to correct. But at the present time the people of this country are far better off than they ever were in the 1970s and early 1980s, and the next best forward that will come in 1991 and 1992 will again bring great benefits to the whole nation. The government team is strong, effective and able. Nothing will give a clearer message to the countries of Europe and the nations of the Middle East than that Britain is united in its determination to be a winner in both areas than to ensure that Mrs Margaret Thatcher continues to be our prime minister.

Yours faithfully,
OULTON WADE
(Joint treasurer,
Conservative party, 1982-90),
House of Lords.

Howe philosophy

From Sir Alfred Sherman

Sir, Sir Geoffrey Howe now asserts (report, November 14) that "the Bretton Woods regime did serve as a useful discipline", in justification for joining a mini-Bretton Woods covering a minority of the world's financial and economic surface. This comes uncannily from a member of a cabinet which abjured Bretton Woods in theory as well as practice.

He had always claimed, until a matter of months ago, to have been the forerunner of the "Thatcherite" and "monetarist" (a term whose epistemological

validity I should personally contest) revolution. As chancellor he certainly expressed the unalloyed "Thatcherite" economic philosophy, and I can find no record of his intellectual conversion since.

No man can serve two doctrines. The economic philosophy underlying Thatcherite views makes nonsense of the claim that "an exchange-rate mechanism can be seen as an extra discipline for getting down inflation". Leaving aside the practical question whether entry into the ERM will abate one wage claim. The essence of the philosophy which Sir Geoffrey articulately espoused from 1974 until very recently is that wage levels cannot cause inflation,

only government monetary policy can do that.

There is no factual basis for his claim that joining the ERM five years ago would have abated our present inflation. Until the Lawson boom predictably - and predictably - produced inflation, Britain's record on inflation was better than those in the ERM.

The point at issue is not doctrinal correctness per se, but intellectual consistency. I find Sir Geoffrey's abandonment of this saddening, whatever its political outcome.

Yours faithfully,
ALFRED SHERMAN,
10 Gerald Road, SW1,
November 14.

Cancer study

From Dr Tim Sheard

Sir, Your report, "Cancer study 'flawed'" (November 9), suggests that the study on survival of women with breast cancer attending the Cancer Help Centre in Bristol has come under "renewed criticism". I am quoted as saying that "the study is seriously flawed". I actually said that the study is "fundamentally flawed" and it has now been scientifically discredited.

I outlined the many reasons for this in a letter to *The Lancet* on November 10, the main point being that the researchers failed to compare like with like and that they did not take into account simple and well-known medical factors which influence the prognosis of breast cancer. They therefore failed to pick up that the women who attended Bristol were more seriously ill than the control group with whom they were being compared. It is no surprise that they went on to relapse and die sooner.

I outlined the many reasons for this in a letter to *The Lancet* on November 10, the main point being that the researchers failed to compare like with like and that they did not take into account simple and well-known medical factors which influence the prognosis of breast cancer. They therefore failed to pick up that the women who attended Bristol were more seriously ill than the control group with whom they were being compared. It is no surprise that they went on to relapse and die sooner.

I am not alone in drawing this conclusion. Sir Walter Bodmer, director of research at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund (which part-funded the study), wrote independently to *The Lancet* and stated: "Our own evaluation is that the study's results can be explained by the fact that women going to Bristol had more severe disease than control women. In particular, they had a much higher rate of local recurrence".

This study is not being subjected to "renewed criticism"; it has been scientifically discredited. Enormous damage has been done in the two months since its publication. I have therefore called upon the researchers to withdraw the report as an important first step in setting straight the public record.

Yours sincerely,
TIM SHEARD,
Cancer Help Centre,
Grove House, Cornwallis Grove,
Clifton,
Bristol, Avon,
November 13.

Aids message

From Mrs Annabel Kanabus

Sir, Valerie Riches' comparison (November 1) of Aids with heart disease and cancer is a reminder of the possible cost of Aids in the future both financially and in terms of human suffering.

The relatively small number of people ill and dying now is a reflection both of the number of people infected with HIV some five to ten years ago, and the use of drugs which slow down, but do not stop, the progression of the disease. The number of people infected is much greater now and most people accept the difficulty of making accurate estimates.

By the time tens of thousands of people are dying there will be

several hundred thousand infected. At that stage in the epidemic it will be impossible to stop the number becoming ill increasing still further over the next few years until the impact of Aids is indeed comparable to heart disease or cancer.

So we must have effective Aids education now; otherwise we will indeed be faced with a tragedy of enormous proportions in a few years' time, and looking back we will all have to face the fact that it could have been prevented.

Yours faithfully,
ANNABEL KANABUS (Trustee,
Avert (Aids Education and Research Trust),
PO Box 91,
Horsham, West Sussex.

Plastics menace

From Mr Roddy Sale

Sir, The black plastic coverings used by farmers for the production of silage and to preserve bales are frequently left uncollected to litter the countryside.

With the progress in producing inexpensive biodegradable plastics, principally by the addition of starch, should not be made obligatory for plastics used in agriculture to be biodegradable?

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant.

RODDY SALE,
Dowdell Home Farm,
Aldershot,
Cheltenham,
Gloucestershire.

Ethics of 'just war'

From the Reverend Professor Jack Mahoney, SJ

Sir, In appealing to the New Testament and claiming that with the conversion of the Roman emperor to Christianity in the fourth century the church succumbed to the allurements of political power, the president of the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship subscribes (November 10), as do others, to the thesis of "the Constantinian betrayal" of the Gospel. The facts, however, allow for a different theology of the church's relationship with society.

With its new-found acceptance and moral authority the early church found itself impelled by its own inner dynamic to accept unprecedented social responsibilities, and thus to renounce the luxury of remaining an elite spiritual enclave for ever opposed to "the world". This involved wrestling, alongside the secular

Water rates

From Mr H. E. Prest

Sir, I recently received a demand for water rates which surprised me as my water supply is metered. I enquired from the Severn Trent Water Authority as to why a rate had been levied. The lady to whom I spoke replied that the authority charged me for cleaning the rain water which drained off my property. I pointed out to the lady that I did not have a garden which elicited the response that I did have a roof.

Yours faithfully,
HEDLEY PREST,
3 The Stables,
Northwick Park,
Blockley, Gloucestershire.

Role of Eucharist

From the Reverend Robin Burgess

Sir, There must be many thousands of people baptised and even confirmed in the Church of England who now play no part in its life and hardly ever enter a church building to worship God. The Prayer Book Society, whose secretary's letter you published on November 5, would no doubt claim that they have been alienated by recent changes in forms of worship.

Is it not more likely that this vast fringe of the uncommitted, the indifferent and uninterested is the product of a tradition of spirituality and worship, based on the Book of Common Prayer, which has clearly failed over the generations to foster any very lively sense of the reality of God in people's lives or desire to worship him?

"Devout or inquiring souls" who enter an Anglican church today are likely to find the Eucharist, the most ancient and

authentic act of distinctively Christian worship, restored to its central place, and in a form which once more brings Anglican worship into touch with the great depth and richness of the Christian liturgical tradition in the West. They will find also that this reform of worship has gone hand in hand with renewal and new thinking in many aspects of the Church's life.

I am sure that such people will find a ready welcome in our churches and no lack of help or explanation in finding their way in what at first may be unfamiliar, or of willingness to guide them further to a point where they can make a fuller commitment of themselves to God and his church.

If they themselves draw back and say, "No, this is not for me", who then will have parted company with whom?

Yours sincerely,
ROBIN BURGESS,
48 Brentmead Gardens, NW10.

Turning a phrase

From Mr J. S. K. Milne

Sir, Jesus, the good shepherd, is I learn (Mr Leonard, November 6), known to the Taiwanese as the goose-keeper.

Similarly, the translators of the Psalms into Gaelic (the Reverend Robert Kirk in the seventeenth century at Aberfoyle and Dr Stuart of Luss in the eighteenth) wrought before the Clearances and the arrival in the Highlands of Borders shepherds with their flocks, and so they rendered the first verse of the 23rd Psalm as *Is e an Tighearna mo bhuachaille: cha bhi mi ann an dith*; in English: "The Lord is my cowherd: I shall not want".

No one, I am glad to report, has been tempted to update this reflection of the ancient pastoral life of the Highlands - that of the summer shielings and the drove roads - with the less sonorous modern word for shepherd.

Yours faithfully,
J. S. K. MILNE,
The Caledonian Club,
9 Halkin Street, SW1.

From Miss Jane Ross

Sir, Animal rights supporters might be cheered to know that in Norway our "miss is as good as a mile" translates as "close doesn't shoot the rabbit".

Yours faithfully,
JANE ROSS,
12 Revelstoke Road,
Surrey, SW18.

Battle for basics

From Mr John D. Shepherd and Mr Adam Macmillan

Sir, John O'Leary's excellent article on basic education in third world countries ("Education", November 5) refers to major contributions being made by the World Bank and Unesco. This is good, but it is top-down, for classroom materials and teacher training the opposite approach is needed.

Having spent modest amounts on research, the Harold Macmillan Trust now has five groups of teachers ready to develop their own materials in Africa and Latin America. We have a big group in Uganda ready and willing to develop materials for teacher training together with the Rungu Library Service we have half-a-dozen British universities ready to supply books to a dozen African universities in response to their requests; we even have about 60 or so British writers of school books who are ready to go and help their counterparts get started.

The "wind of change" is still blowing in Africa. We must help, and a vitally important way of doing it is by working to improve basic education. Most vital of all is to help people to help themselves.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN D. SHEPHERD (Chairman),
ADAM MACMILLAN
(Family trustee),
The Harold Macmillan Trust,
107-109 Temple Chambers,
Temple Avenue, EC4.

Turning turtle

From Mr B. H. Brock

Sir, I share Mrs Elizabeth Marriage's concern (November 3) on finding a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles' Advent calendar, but surely these creatures can provide a true parable for modern times. Living in the symbolic environment of an urban sewer, their being is the result of radioactive mutation. Raised on junk food, they have been indoctrinated in violence at an early age.

Nevertheless their teenage behaviour exemplifies all that is valid for good in the struggle against evil. Perhaps a Christian message?

Yours faithfully,
B. H. BROCK,
Willow Cottage, Burcombe,
Salisbury, Wiltshire.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number - (071) 782 5046.

CONSULTING AMERICA

Democracy and war make uneasy bedfellows. Democracy requires publicity, consultation and compromise; all of which may weaken the effectiveness of military action. Demands that the US Congress be recalled for a full-dress debate on American aims in the Gulf have multiplied since President Bush's decision last week to send reinforcements to Saudi Arabia. On balance, President Bush should heed them.

The White House objects, ostensibly because Mr Bush's strategy is unchanged and still rests on hopes of a peaceful solution to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. That response is tactically unwise because it undermines the impact of the troop reinforcements on President Saddam Hussein and because it is not the true reason. In so far as American strategy is unchanged, it rests on the ultimate willingness to use force. Mr Bush is reluctant to consult Congress because there is no guarantee that he would win unequivocal support for military action to drive Iraq out of Kuwait, without conditions being attached (for example, not to carry the war into Iraq) which could drag out the war and raise American casualties.

Mr Bush's misgivings are understandable. A special session of Congress would bear almost no resemblance to September's emergency one-day session of the British parliament. The debates would be infinitely more protracted. Thanks to the separation of powers between the American presidency and legislature, Mr Bush could not play the same role as Mrs Thatcher. Above all, long-running constitutional arguments about which, president or congress, has the authority to order troops into battle would be given a field day.

In his handling of Iraqi aggression so far, however, Mr Bush has made a point of consultation, successfully balancing military decisiveness and speed with patient diplomacy to build and maintain an unprecedented international coalition. He can ill-afford to ignore

advice that public support will erode without a thorough airing of the choices facing America, particularly since the unnecessarily cryptic nature of his recent utterances has helped to generate the demands for more public debate.

As a war in which thousands of American soldiers could die becomes more certain, Americans need a fuller explanation than such one-liners as "I've had it". Mr Bush's attacks on dissenters for giving succour to the enemy this week are counter-productive. Such defensiveness can only feed anti-war sentiment. Dissent is the lifeblood of democracy, persuasion the essence of leadership. The president needs to put his one-liners into context with a powerful restatement of America's war aims.

Mr Bush must explain why the demands of the United Nations - unconditional Iraqi withdrawal, restoration of Kuwait's legal government, release of all hostages - admit of no compromise. He must explain why Iraq's military and political ambitions pose such exceptional dangers to international, as well as regional, security that America's interests are directly threatened. He needs to explain why sanctions may not achieve their objective. While emphasising the absolute priority of defeating Iraq, he should not be afraid to mention the need for more democracy in the Middle East. He needs to reassure Americans of his determination to maintain the widest possible international support for whatever decision is needed, even if responsibility ultimately rests with the White House.

Such an appeal should precede Congressional debate, which Mr Bush neither can nor should preclude. A special session could help to prepare Americans for war, by giving their representatives a fair say in what cannot but be a national debate. Having decided to reinforce America's power to strike, Mr Bush cannot ignore legitimate anxieties on his home front.

FAILING IN CHARITY

St Paul's exhortation that of faith, hope and charity "the greatest of these is charity" is not impressing the average family. The proportion of people giving to charity has fallen to 74 per cent from 78 per cent last year, and 80 per cent the year before. The trend away from giving - against the hopes of the present government - started before high inflation and interest rates began to empty the public's pockets.

Give-as-you-earn, the government's cumbersome scheme for tax-exempt charitable deductions from pay, has, as widely predicted, proved no more than a one-day wonder. The Treasury and Inland Revenue made the scheme as unattractive as possible since it involved Whitehall's greatest horror, open-ended tax deductibility.

Merely shaming the public for its meanness will not correct the trend. The director of the Charities Aid Foundation, Michael Brophy, concludes that charities have counted too much on tax exemptions to persuade individuals to give more. This faith never was particularly realistic. Somebody too mean (or distrustful) to give to charity from his taxed income is unlikely to be less reluctant to give from his untaxed income. The charities, not the donor, benefit from tax-exempt giving.

The most damaging new excuse for not giving to charities is that they have become extravagant, inefficient and in some cases even corrupt. This belief, fed by occasional scandals, has hurt good and bad charities alike. The blame rests heavily on the Charity Commissioners, who undermined public confidence in their ability to police the charity world until

they were called sharply to order by the public accounts committee in 1988.

The Comptroller and Auditor General, John Bourn, yesterday published the National Audit Office report to parliament on the patient's progress so far. He is impressed by the commissioners' response to the committee's censures. A new computer, tighter rules for regulating charity accounts and more staff employed on monitoring and investigation are beginning to clean up the sometimes sleazy charity world, though the report notes that the legal requirement for the regular submission of accounts is still being widely ignored.

The commissioners have a natural fear that to hold charities rigorously to the letter of the law, using the courts where necessary, may lead to further public scandal and further damage to the reputation of charities as a whole. In the short term they may be right, but in the long term discipline is the only way public confidence will be restored. Confidence would be further increased by the early enactment of the Home Office's legislative proposals to give the commissioners sharper teeth.

The widely expected new charities bill was missing from the Queen's Speech. The National Audit Office yesterday recommended such a bill as a matter of urgency. Tougher laws are needed. But the publicity alone would persuade a sceptical public that charities are becoming trustworthy enough to deserve greater support, thus advancing the government's desire for charitable giving to supplement the welfare state.

Is this the next Denis Thatcher?

As her husband's campaign gathers pace, Anne Heseltine tells Libby Purves how she would handle the role of prime ministerial spouse

By late on Wednesday, the Heseltines' house in Belgrave would have made a promising setting for an upmarket television sitcom. A huddle of photographers stood under the lamp in the street, waiting to catch the star. At the front door, under a thatch of white-blonde hair, was a blonde and glamorous Alexandra Heseltine. "Ooh! They're still here! Gosh, I've hardly been able to walk my poor little doggies!" Upstairs, her equally glamorous mother paced the drawing-room in short, pink dress and black stockings, cancelling a dinner party and hunting for a cigarette. "A bag, a bag! At times like this bad habits come back!" All day she had answered the telephone and stood on doorsteps performing the political wife's first photographic duty of gazing admiringly up and sideways at her husband. In the best traditions of sitcom, this was all Dad's fault.

"He honestly only decided late on Tuesday night," Anne Heseltine said, "after Geoffrey Howe's speech. I heard it in the car, did you? Goodness, I nearly drove off the road. Geoffrey is usually such a polite man." Mr Heseltine told his family that night of his challenge for the Tory leadership. "The marvellous thing about it all," Mrs Heseltine says, "is that all the children [Annabel, aged 27, Alexandra, 24, and Rupert, 23] now appear to have moved back in. I think they don't want to miss anything. It's wonderful having them around. I wasn't very good with babies, but

children and teenagers, I adore." I suggested that it must have been a relief to have the challenge out in the open. "Yes, it's been an agonising decision for him. Now even if there's a bit of mud flying, I dare say the adrenalin will float us all through it."

She seemed remarkably cheerful for a woman who — as one of her children put it — might within the fortnight have to become the next Denis Thatcher. British satire has carved a not entirely flattering role for the prime ministerial spouse, and I wondered whether Mrs Heseltine had contemplated this. "Oh, yes. I've been in it already," she said. "I once turned up by name in *Mrs Wilson's Diary* something about 'the new charwoman Annie Heseltine. I wish she wouldn't shuffle about all day with a bag hanging out of her mouth'. I always rather hoped the character would reappear, but it never did."

She read French and German at London University and then went to work for Hilary Rubinstein at Gollancz, the publishers, where she was known universally as "Superbeast". Later, a job at an art gallery, where she began to read widely in art history, confirmed her life-long preoccupation with paintings. It is no dilettante amusement of a political wife-in-waiting: she comes along on the subject, dividing her life into phases from a teenage passion for pre-Raphaelites, the excitement of the Picasso exhibition in the late Fifties, to her current mania for the school of Antwerp Mannerists of the early 16th century.



Ready for the fray: Anne Heseltine says "It's the small inaccurate things that hurt... Like when they go on about Michael being dressy"

'Well, he never did swing that mace. Someone jogged him. He's a calm, relaxed man. Obsessive gardener'

"Stylised, religious themes, wonderful colour and highly elaborate hats. Slightly camp attitudes, too..." She rose to her feet, striking a Mannerist attitude and sketching in a hat with her hands. One could see why she gets on so well with teenagers.

She married Michael Heseltine in 1962, after helping him unsuccessfully fight Coventry ("against my best friend's father, Maurice Edelman — it felt very cheeky"). Onlookers at the wedding remember Julian Critchley making an emotional speech to the effect that the moment he saw Anne's legs, he told Michael "You've got to have those pins for

your platform", a memory Mrs Heseltine equably confirms. As for the decorative and subordinate duties of a Tory wife, Mr Heseltine was, she insists, very fair in pointing them out. "But I'm not political. As far as Michael's career is concerned, I want him to succeed, but I don't want it for myself, not at all. Some Westminster wives do, terribly, and get angry and frustrated when their husbands fail or resign. I don't. When he came home after Westland I was sad for him, because he minded a lot, but not for the rest of us." And political duties? "I don't like to camp-follow. I tend to feel like a spare thumb."

Having three children in quick succession, and some difficulty keeping nannies ("three under fours do rather gang up on a nanny, you know"), her own career faded during the years they grew up. Later, she studied for a year at the Courtauld Institute and opened her own gallery, but gave it up when her husband became defence secretary in order to travel with him. "It was the best decision. And it was fascinating. We've travelled in the last four years a great deal, too. We were in Czechoslovakia just before the revolution, and in Poland and the Gulf. I like to meet people and talk about what's happening and then

Michael and I talk things out endlessly. Besides," she adds honestly, "I can usually slope off to art galleries."

At home, life is inevitably well-cushioned: an estate in Northamptonshire where Mrs Heseltine breeds Hanoverian horses, the Belgrave house, and a cottage in Somerset. "I do know the other kind of life, though, you know — I earn £7.10s at Gollancz, and lived on it, too. I've been broke with Michael as well in the early days." Her present occupation is running the Ashmolean Museum's appeal in the Campaign for Oxford, which she does with energy. An appeal colleague described work-

ing with her as like handling an extremely good, well-bred horse: "You suggest something to her as a possibility, and suddenly she's jumped it."

With all this can the prospect of incarceration in Number 10 Downing Street really hold much appeal? "It may never happen," she says carefully. "But it's what you make of it. I suppose. A chance to meet lots of people, anyway... perhaps introduce a few contents of one's own in the art world. I don't know... Oh well, Audrey Callaghan wrote a book while she was inside, didn't she?"

And the flak, and the downright hatred, and the ever-deteriorating tone of political battles in the past decade? Will it hurt? "Yes, a bit. Those things used to get to me. I don't mind *Spitting Image*. I would adore one of the puppets to put in the lavatory. It's the small inaccurate things that hurt... Like when they go on about Michael being dressy. It takes real effort to make him buy a suit, and as for the ties, I think the worst excesses have been my fault. And the hair. He's got a double crown and he can't cut it any shorter or it stands up in spikes."

What other comards hurt? "Well, he never did swing that mace. Someone jogged him. He's a calm, relaxed man. Obsessive gardener. And as for not taking jokes against himself, believe me, with children like ours he's had to."

The only story which threw a hard shadow over her face was the one about her husband coming home in the middle of his mission to Liverpool after the 1981 riots because it was his daughter's coming-out dance. "It was her eighteenth birthday and we'd planned it for months and we're a very close family and it mattered to her, and he got home at 9.30 and was away at seven..." she stopped, and laughed. "Oh, but politicians are Aunt Sallies. They're there to be knocked down."

She was rather nice about Mrs Thatcher, by the way. "I don't really know her socially. But when I took Annabel to the House once when she was smaller, we ended up in her office and she crawled around the floor hunting in cupboards for the last can of Coke for her. I think she's very human, you know. I like that."

Land where a daughter has also risen

The Japanese have somehow proved mastery at marketing. Their country successfully sells itself as part woodcut fantasy of temples and cherry blossom, part neon-lit Manhattan of the next millennium, even though the real Tokyo looks as if a schoolboy in the heavens tipped out a box of Lego bricks, put a noodle shop on every other corner and left it at that.

The romantic-cum-frantic image of Japan survives because the Japanese have learnt to sell themselves. With no resources apart from an electrically charged workforce, they have little else to sell. What is puzzling is how it has managed to do it so well with so few classy and innovative marketers. Eiko Ishioka, whose wake-up-you poster designs, television commercials and stage sets have helped to sell everything from Issey Miyake frocks to West End plays, is one of the few.

In a country that thrives on being prim and predictable, Ms Ishioka shocks by plastering city advertising hoardings with naked bodies (some of them male, many of them black), pictures of provocatively-shaped peaches, and portraits of plainly beautiful village women from Africa and India that gave an international tang to Japanese fashion before Benetton made its first V-neck sweater. Her advertising images have turned the Parco department store chain into a meeting place for Japan's young, and have kept it fashionable for more than 20 years, a feat in a country where Sony seems to produce a new version of its Walkman once a month to keep ahead of teenagers' tastes.

With a book of her work published here this week, and Ms Ishioka arriving next week to charge admission and played to packed houses for six performances.

One Japanese woman has defied convention and prejudice to raise eyebrows on the design scene

about to get a taste of her style. Ms Ishioka does not only work for advertisers. She created designs for Paul Schrader's film *Mishima*, David Hwang's play *M. Butterfly*, and the Philip Glass opera *The Making of the Representative for Planet 8*. She won a Grammy award for a Miles Davis album cover, and turned an Issey Miyake fashion show into a cross between a Broadway musical and a one-act drama: they charged admission and played to packed houses for six performances.

Sometimes, Ms Ishioka says, she feels that she is involved in too many media strands, "but most times I feel that my different interests give me new ideas and perspectives. They cross-fertilise. Also it helps me to develop a universal language, rather than a Japanese one. I have tried very hard not to be limited to Japanese themes. Nowadays, the Japanese motif is changing and you can no longer really rely on cherry trees and geishas and things like that. But when I started it wasn't, and I trained myself to look for new motifs. When I got my chance to collaborate with Europeans and Americans it came easily to me. I could work on international projects without first having to shed a Japanese skin. I would like to do more abroad. I want to direct a film. But commercials, films, posters, it's all the same to me. I don't see films as superior to posters."

Ms Ishioka, whose "big hero" is Michelangelo — "he always had a client, but he always managed to achieve his own spiritual statement, even on client work" — is so demanding that she can bring collaborators close to tears, but they work with her because the creative tension glows in the end result.

She may produce unconventional images because she is unconventional herself. In Japan, where women in positions of power and influence are rare, and women willing to flout the convention of devoting their lives to fathers, husbands and elders are rarer still, Ms Ishioka is punchy, confident, unmarried and bows to nobody.

"At the age of seven I realised that my father's job fascinated me and my mother's job bored me," she says. "My father was a pioneer graphic designer. My mother wanted to be a professional woman, but she ended up being just a housewife. My grandmother told her that if she went to university she would never find a husband. So both my parents stressed that I should have an occupation. I went to Tokyo's national university of fine arts to train as a designer."

Her father tried to deter her from opting for graphic design, which made Ms Ishioka determined to do it. "My father accepted that going against the grain was part of my character, but that didn't mean he believed I would make it. That pattern has repeated itself. When I started to become well known, male rivals used to say I was only

famous because I was a woman, a novelty. I promised myself then that I would become so obviously special in my field that they would have to shut their mouths."

Ms Ishioka, who says that she likes "a strong woman", uses the image often in her work. When she became a professional art director she worked for Shiseido, the Japanese cosmetics company. "Until I came along all the advertising had been done by men," she says. "They portrayed women as dolls who never looked into the camera and walked three steps behind men. I wanted a woman who looked healthy, who could look a man in the eye, who had power, who had the confidence to live alone."

"People expect Japanese advertising to use Japanese motifs. But why can't I use black women or Faye Dunaway? But because I use women it doesn't mean I'm just talking about women. I use women to convey things about the human condition."

Because she used nudes in her advertisements as early as the Seventies, some accuse Ms Ishioka of trying to shock. Admirers envy her ability to make even a pile of bricks look erotic to people outside the building trade.

"There are three reasons I use nudes," she says. "First, I like the human body, whether it's the bum or the tits or the shoulder, whether the body is a man's or a woman's. Secondly, 90 per cent of the people in this business use women, but the way the advertisements turned out bothered me. I was disgusted by the way male designers used female nudes in a cheap, vulgar way. My challenge was to subvert this way of treating naked bodies."

"Thirdly, to make a good advertisement you have to approach people's minds and bodies. Eroticism is a very important factor in attracting people's souls, but it was not my intention to use naked bodies just to shock or be eye-catching. But after thrashing out an idea, after many twists and turns, the result turned out to be erotic. It just happened that way."

When she was 25, Ms Ishioka says, she won a prize in a Japanese competition to design a poster for a symposium. "I only used geometric shapes. People said even that was erotic."

JOE JOSEPH

• Eiko by Eiko: Eiko Ishioka, Japan's Ultimate Designer is published by Jonathan Cape, price £7.5.



Beauty in strength: western motif in a promotion for the Parco store by Eiko Ishioka

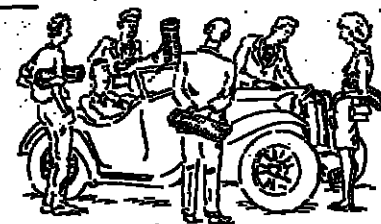
Over 1,000 fabulous fashion and beauty presents to give away (the Christmas issue of New Woman is a cracker)



OUT NOW

New Woman. You can't be one without it.

Park your car in the right place and it will sell quicker.



Of all the classified car advertisements that appear in all the quality daily papers, 41% of them are in The Times. That makes it a pretty big showroom, by anyone's standards. So phone 071-481 4000 to place your advertisement. Once your car is in The Times, it's got 1.2 million potential drivers.

071-481 4000

SELL IT THROUGH THE TIMES

Bold expedition to the peaks

OPERA
The Ring Saga
Stockland Green,
Birmingham

THE sheer daring of the enterprise amazes. City of Birmingham Touring Opera, having conquered Rossini, Puccini, Verdi and Mozart in reduced versions, now butters moves on to the Himalayas of the repertoire and offers a *Ring* cut down for a dozen singers with an orchestra of 18, and compacted into two, admittedly very long evenings. Wagner's theatre of the world will thus be able to unfold in sports halls and other irregular venues all the way from Kendal to Salisbury, from Bedford to Belfast, before arriving at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in January. And no doubt, if the enthusiasm in Birmingham this week is any indication, it will be cheered on its way by audiences who could never get to full-scale performances.

That must be the main justification (even if one must register some doubt about the utility of the project as a social and educational exercise when the Munich *Ring* is currently being broadcast on television), since the artistic success of this CBO production is rather less than could have been hoped. The difficulties of presenting a low-cost, tourable, condensed *Ring* are all too obviously exposed without, in most cases, being solved.

Jonathan Dove's scoring is very skilful, but what it offers is more a substitute than a re-creation. Moreover, the task of having 18 players mimic 80 can only be accomplished in the early stages of the cycle. Throughout most of *Das Rheingold* and much of *Die Walküre* (except when the organ bristles through the texture) one can be seduced into believing one is hearing the original score, but in the two later operas the imitation inevitably breaks down, and the effect can come dangerously close to parody.



Yvonne Howard as Fricka and Patrick Wheatley as Wotan in the CBO production of *The Ring Saga*

It is perhaps for this reason that Dove and the producer, Graham Vick, cut these later operas much more drastically. Whereas *Das Rheingold* loses only about 20 per cent of its duration, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* are both cut to half length, and the slashes are all too visible around whole scenes that have gone. Once again, the solution is badly practical, lacking any compensation in the way of wrestling some creative achievement from the necessity of cutting.

So it is with Vick's staging. The single set is a three-tier wooden zigzag, with the orchestra boxed into the bottom tier. This has the excellent effect of giving the instrumental sound some directional force and natural amplification, but the possibilities of re-inventing Wagner for rudimentary resources are rarely more than hinted at. Most successful is what used to be the second act of *Siegfried*, where the Woodbird is a model on a pole carried about by the singer, and Fafner appears within a loose basket-work dragon's head. In both cases the dramatic gesture is emblematic and elegant, suggesting the dis-

closed but real magic of the kabuki theatre, and one wishes more of the production could have been in this style.

Instead of that, the acting is mostly in an undisciplined, naturalistic mode, and the costumes make no attempt to hide the budgetary limitations. The Valkyries, in shapely royal-blue gowns and shiny little helmets decorated with what look like bats' wings, are particularly disadvantaged.

The vocal performances run up against the problem of how to sing Wagner when the massive orchestral challenge is not there: it is a bit like asking high jumpers to vault over sleeping policemen. There is also the problem of the Stockland Green Leisure Centre is typical of CBO venues, of how to sing anything in a gymnasium. In most cases the singers follow the acoustic and musical demands for volume, which means that they are out of scale with the accompaniment, though the more intimate, dialogue-oriented scenes find them using the opportunity to be more discreet: again it is *Das Rheingold* that comes over as the

most suitable case for this treatment. (One of the paradoxes of the *Ring* is that as its ostensible location becomes more homely, from the three worlds of *Das Rheingold* to the Rhine-bank palace of *Götterdämmerung*, its dramatic and musical universe becomes ever vaster.)

There are many impressive individual performances, especially from Yvonne Howard as a resolute, proudly sung Fricka and Wheatley as a weary but strong-willed Wotan. Linda McLeod as Brunhilde and, in particular, Paul Wilson as both Siegmund and Siegfried contribute prodigious feats of stamina. One is left wondering, nevertheless, quite what sort of an occasion one has been at.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

THEATRE
The Kingdom of Desire
Lytelton

THE National's latest import comes as clearly stamped "made in Taiwan" as some of the souvenirs on sale on the other side of Hungerford Bridge. That is to say, it is not really western, not quite eastern, and not fully both at once.

The performers, the Contemporary Legend Theatre of Taipei, have set themselves the task of reconciling traditional Chinese form with foreign content, and sometimes the strain shows. Though *Kingdom of Desire* traces the rise and fall of an oriental Macbeth, it is far broader and more external than anything Shakespeare penned. Though it has its exotic moments, it hardly matches the visual daring dis-

played by the Peking Opera when it visited London a few years ago. No wonder the result has been both attacked as meretricious and admired as innovative back home.

Here, it is best summed up as fascinatingly different. Wu Hsiang-kuo's scowling Macbeth, or Au-shu Cheng, Lord of Chi, as he is rechristened, does not expire discreetly on stage. He reels, stumbles and totters across a towering rock, wrenching out the arrow that has spiked his stomach. Then he falls 20 feet, to the ground, doing a back-somersault en route. Then he lurches and blunders round the stage, freezes for a full minute with his arm pointed accusingly aloft, and topples like a tree onto his back to the sound of sepulchral chuckles from the flies. Match that, Kean, Irving, Olivier, anyone.

There are plenty of less sensational changes. Messengers, like the dying Macbeth, tend to go in for aerial flips. Gorgously pat-

terned dressing gowns, sometimes with flags sticking out from their backs, substitute for tweed. Duncan, King of Chi, wears an enormous mortar board, with white tassels only a bit shorter than the thin gold curtains dangling from his ears. Soliloquy and most of the dialogue is out, as are counterparts for Macduff, Malcolm and several other characters. Chanting and crooning in the upper registers of the scale is in, as is acrobatic swirling round the stage and musical banging and clattering beneath it.

More surprisingly, Lady Macbeth kills Banquo's assassin with a sword half her size and mis-carries a baby, in each case on what the programme calls "the night of the coronation party". The stress is presumably what eventually sends Wei Hai-ming, who plays the part, fluttering and wailing round the stage in white muslin like some Asiatic Miss Havisham. But it is hard to coin the logic of a

performance which is less spoken than half-warbled, half-squeaked in a spiralling soprano; and all, of course, in Chinese. The impression an English audience is likely to get is of a killer mouse oddly turned into a distraught canary.

A Taiwanese audience would doubtless get quite another impression. That is the sort of problem bound to arise when Stratford is crossed with the Forbidden City. But if the idiom seems alien and incongruous, and Shakespeare somewhat lost, it is still easy to admire the colour, the boldness, the energy, the confidence in a part of the self English performers still find hard to handle: namely, the body. To be an actor in China is also to be a singer, dancer, gymnast and, for all I know, juggler and trapeze artist as well. Match that, Kean, Macready, Gielgud, anyone.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

THEATRE
Trios
Haymarket Studio,
Leicester

FOR his first stage play the American novelist, and Booker Prize judge, Edmund White tells three love stories. Each story contains only the characters of husband, wife and blond young lover, performed in each story by the same actors. Furthermore, their variously doomed love affairs are set within three different classes in three periods.

In the 19th century, a conscience-stricken woman leaves her aristocratic husband for a practised seducer. His quantity in-credible code of honour keeps him

from leaving her, though his passion fades as poverty replaces affluence. Her love continues undiminished.

The Victorian lovers needed money; in the 1920s lovers needed luck. The setting here is the servants' quarters of a country house where a genteel footman woos a golden-haired but deaf parlour maid married to the brutal chauffeur. Luck is what these lovers are denied, by author's whim rather than dramatic inevitability, though White might argue that Venus always keeps the rogue card of jealousy up her sleeve.

The third story takes place in contemporary New York — nothing uneasy about the slang here — where a promiscuous soap-actress brings her painter husband and student lover together, sort of, and ends up jealous of both.

White ranges back and forth between the stories, beginning with three scenes for the different wives and lovers, then scenes for wives and husbands, subsequently allowing the different development to dictate the fall of the characters. On Vicki Mortimer's elegantly symmetrical set a dozen grey panels open to reveal the artefacts of different periods; putting them into place gives the cast time to change from white bustle to sloppy jeans, from painter's scruffy shirt to chauffeur's uniform.

White succeeds in showing how different milieux alter love's options, though I suspect it is class that rings the changes far more than passing years. One drawback of the structure repeats several moments when disaster, in the person of a husband, does not quite come through the door: a

case of rumpus interruptus. Yet the author knows how to tell a good tale, and he is grandly served by the cast of Simon Usher's strong and tender production.

Robert Langdon Lloyd plays the variously disturbed husbands and young Martin McKellan is clever as the American bed-hopper and passionate as the lady, with her lovely voice sounding as if breaking in an empty room. But she is outstanding as the deaf girl torn between duty and desire, tilting her head and stretching long elegant fingers like a conductor straining to catch a piccolo's gentlest breath.

White thinks of romance, licit or illicit, as a pretty sour dish but it has been most beautifully served on the plate.

JEREMY KINGSTON

NEW RELEASES

CRIMINAL LAW (14) Mervyn Dole's thriller about a smart attorney arranged in the case of a murdered physician meets counterforce (Gary O'Neil, Kevin Connolly, Martin Campbell).
Cinema: Chelsea (01-352 5282).
Riviera (01-430 1222) Stoneybrook Avenue (01-352 8881).

DAROGAN (16) Liam Neeson as a computer scientist seeking revenge on the criminal underworld. Home entertainment: Laserdisc (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

THE IDLE THIEF (16) Gaudy, engaging comedy starring two real-life thieves and a real-life policeman. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

THE REFLECTING SKY (15) Woody Allen's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE (15) Jane Fonda's comedy about a woman who falls in love with a man who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

BETSY'S WEDDING (15) Alan Alda's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

BRID ON A WIRE (12) Empty-headed comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

BULLDOGS (15) Bully is a comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

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FLATLINERS (15) John Wood's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

LOVE AT LARGE (15) Alan Rickman's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

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CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and where indicated in the symbol (S) on release across the country.

THE FRESHMAN (PG) Quirky comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

GHOST (12) Jerry Zucker's supernatural thriller. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

GOODFELLAS (15) Martin Scorsese's gangster epic. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

THE HANDMAID'S TALE (15) Margaret Atwood's novel about a future society. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE (15) Jane Fonda's comedy about a woman who falls in love with a man who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

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MY BETTER BLUES (PG) Steve Martin as an impulsive comedian who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

THE FRESHMAN (PG) Quirky comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

GHOST (12) Jerry Zucker's supernatural thriller. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

GOODFELLAS (15) Martin Scorsese's gangster epic. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

THE HANDMAID'S TALE (15) Margaret Atwood's novel about a future society. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

AN ANGEL AT MY TABLE (15) Jane Fonda's comedy about a woman who falls in love with a man who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

BETSY'S WEDDING (15) Alan Alda's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

BRID ON A WIRE (12) Empty-headed comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

BULLDOGS (15) Bully is a comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS (15) Woody Allen's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

FLATLINERS (15) John Wood's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

LOVE AT LARGE (15) Alan Rickman's comedy about a man who falls in love with a woman who is a professional thief. Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111) Screen Cinema (01-430 5111).

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Galleries: Van Gogh and his compatriots in Glasgow, Murillo re-evaluated in Liverpool, and (below, right) Scotland's new Whistler show

Dutch side to a giant

Fame on the scale of Vincent Van Gogh's unfortunately mislabeled *Illusion* that goes nowhere. All the big Van Gogh shows of recent years, with the exception of the Musée d'Orsay's *Van Gogh & Paris*, have shown him in isolation. While nothing can dim his blazing individuality, that individuality is put in perspective by knowledge of who his artistic friends and associates were, what influences he underwent and subsequently rejected, and what was going on around him while he steered his own unpredictable course. That is what the Burrell Collection in Glasgow has done with its enthralling show, *The Age of Van Gogh: Dutch Painting 1880-1895*.

Holland's artistic revolution, though later than France's, was no less far-reaching. Within two decades Dutch art was dragged out of mid-Victorian anecdotalism and pitched into the 20th century. Some of the names involved used to be famous far beyond Holland. Alastair Tuden is a special case, since most of his success was achieved in England, but the Brothers Maris (Matthijs especially) were much admired in the circles of *Studio* magazine. Marius Bauer was highly praised for his intricate and exotic etchings, and Jan Toorop had many English connections. Little good it did them, until recently when a revival of interest in Symbolism and a search for affordable Impressionists brought the Hague School back into the limelight.

The earliest Van Goghs in this show date from 1885 and show him involved with the dark colours and sombre naturalism then dominant in Holland. One fascinating comparison is with George Brauer, at this time his closest associate. Brauer is an interesting neglected figure, who developed into a dashing painter of night and low-life scenes after Van Gogh's departure for Paris.

While, for Van Gogh, going abroad was a major stimulus, Brauer suggests that he might well have developed spectacularly if he had stayed at home.

He would have found no lack of competition, whichever way he had gone. If it had been a matter of brilliant colour, such Dutch

Pointillists as Toorop (for a while) and Hendrik Bremmer could have matched him. If it had been in freedom and fluency of brushwork, Isaac Israëls scenes of café life have plenty of verve. The exquisite grey Thames landscape of Willem Arnold Witsen or the gleaming golden Thames vision of Toorop show that Van Gogh was not the only one who sought and found new inspiration abroad. But they took their new perceptions back home with them. There are, in addition, many aspects of Dutch painting in these years that Van Gogh never touched on: the flat, monumental handling of Jan Voerman's "Cattle beside the IJssel near Hattem", for instance, or the perverse and sinuous symbolism of Johann Thorn Prikker's weird religious works.

Yet Van Gogh towers above all. Two qualities come through in everything he does: an almost obsessive intensity of vision, and an unswerving consistency of development. Toorop might be a major artist, but he falls short because there seems to be no sense of necessity behind his constant stylistic changes. Brauer and Israëls almost match Van Gogh's intensity at moments, but neither seems so maniacally committed. But there is no reason to ignore Van Gogh's contemporaries, especially when they can give so much pleasure.

Things are happening in Liverpool. The Walker Art Gallery has always been known for its Victorian splendours, both of building and of contents. For a long time there was a strong element of mockery about this: all those awful problem pictures and mythological set-pieces, would anyone ever take them seriously again? The answer recently has been a rousing affirmative. No body now disputes a major Leighton's or Rossetti's right to the (sometimes considerable) amount of wall-space it occupies. But possibly the balance has shifted too far: the latest developments at the gallery seem designed, at least partly, to set the record straight.

Along with its 19th-century collection, the Walker has a very respectable, if haphazard, assemblage of earlier art. Now the man in charge, Julian Treubert, has



Two masters reassessed: Murillo's reassembled *Virgin and Child in Glory* and Whistler's unpretentious etching, *The Kitchen*

decided to rearrange the Medieval and Renaissance Galleries much more as they would have been when first built. This entails covering the walls with silk damask, and hanging the pictures more thickly than has been fashionable. He has also set the scene for the paintings by putting some of Merseyside's holdings of decorative art from the same periods together with the paintings.

The rehang has brought some unexpected bonuses. The Walker has long had the two side-panels of the so-called *Aachen Altarpiece*, which was owned by a Manchester dealer in the mid-19th century. He sold the wings to the Walker, and the centre-piece to the National Gallery in London. Now the National Gallery has lent its section, so that the whole thing can be seen reassembled for the first time in 150 years.

Another once dismembered and now reassembled painting is the centre-piece of the new exhibition at the Walker, *Murillo in Focus*. The Walker's own important Murillo, "The Virgin and Child in Glory", painted for the Archbishop of Seville in 1673, was cut up in the 18th century and pieced together again only after the

Peninsular Wars. For the show this painting is brought together with a small oil sketch that was almost certainly the "sample" Murillo offered in order to secure the commission, and with other works from the same period of his career. The invitation is clearly to re-evaluate Murillo. His popularity, unequalled in the early 19th century, has long been diminished in comparison with his Spanish peers, leaving him under a cloud as a sugary sentimentalist.

That reputation hardly seems fair when the paintings are viewed. But as the show's curator, Xanth Brooks, points out, Murillo's currency was debased by innumerable relatively coarse reproductions, and it was through them that he was largely remembered. This show handsomely makes amends to Murillo for past misunderstandings.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

The Age of Van Gogh: The Burrell Collection Pollok Country Park, Glasgow (041-649 7151) Daily 10-5, Wed to 10, Sun to 6, until February 10.

Murillo in Focus The Walker Art Gallery, William Brown Street, Liverpool (051-207 0001), Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 2-5, until January 13.



From the Channel to the Clyde

James Abbott McNeill Whistler once wrote: "I will let things of mine go to Scotland or Ireland or America - I want no pictures or drawings in England." Ultimately, the priority specified by the Francophile American dandy, once accused by Ruskin of "lingering a pot of paint in the public's face", was honoured: in 1935 the late artist's sister-in-law donated the enormous quantity of work left in his studio to Glasgow University. Augmented by subsequent bequests, the university's Hunterian Art Gallery now boasts a Whistler collection rivalled only by that of the Freer Gallery in Washington.

Whistler's soft spot for Scotland, and for Glasgow in particular, is understandable. Although he only visited Edinburgh and the Empire's second city once as a young man, Glasgow Corporation was the first public body anywhere

to purchase one of his pictures. They picked the Louvre, which bought the much-saturated portrait of his mother, by acquiring that of Scotland's most famous emigrant, Thomas Carlyle. In the 1880s and 1890s the Glasgow Boys virtually became his disciples - their hazy effects are unthinkable without his example - and it was through the good offices of his personal friends E.A. Walton and James Guthrie that Glasgow University conferred an honorary doctorate on the artist before his death in 1903.

Few 19th-century artists can have crossed the Channel as frequently as Whistler. As a young man he was a student in Gleyre's atelier and, in spite of his decades of residence in Chelsea, Paris remained his intellectual home; Mallarmé and Montesquieu were his friends, virtually every French artist from Courbet to Monet his

associate. So the Hunterian found itself with the perfect candidate for celebration during Glasgow's year as European City of Culture.

Much of the painting - the high-lights of which are the full-length female portraits and a screen in which London's Battersea Bridge is "orientalised" to near abstraction - is on permanent display. Whistler in Europe presents a selection of etchings, watercolours and pastels which resulted from the artist's numerous forays to the Continent and these can be viewed advantageously against the background of the paintings and decorative work.

Whistler was an enthusiastic etcher. With a freedom unconventional for the period, he would draw directly from nature onto the plate and then manipulate the inks during the printing process to give rise to tonal effects. Especially as a young man, but also during the whole of his career, Rembrandt was his main inspiration. In a drypoint print of a sleeping nude (one of his Parisian mistresses), for example, the form is modelled with a delicate hatching which contrasts with the sketchiness with which the bed clothes and draperies are roughly indicated.

It was the unpretentiousness of the Dutch genre tradition which attracted him. There are several prints depicting shop facades - a fish shop in Brussels, carpet menders sitting in a doorway - which could, in the hands of an artist less sensitive to atmosphere, appear merely banal. Whistler, however, seizes on the salient visual incident and elevates the subject: in the crumbling doorway to a typically dilapidated Venetian garden, a youth reclines, one of the city's cats holds court.

The fiasco of the Ruskin libel case bankrupted Whistler (he was awarded a derisory farthing damages) and led to a year-long stay in Venice, subsidised by the Fine Arts Society, during which he produced 50 etchings and double the number of pastels. The way in which the chally Venetian light gives the illusion that form itself is dissolving was exciting for Whistler and encouraged him to stretch his technique still further.

There is an intensely evocative panorama called "The Little Venice" in which, although the silhouettes of the famous landmarks can be made out, the beauty of the whole derives from the shimmering surface of the lagoon, an impression hard enough to achieve in paint: in a graphic medium it is dauntingly difficult.

ANDREW GIBSON WILLIAMS

Whistler in Europe can be seen at the Hunterian Art Gallery, Hillhead Street, Glasgow (041-339 8855) until January 26.

Part 54 of David Sinclair's collectors' A-Z, a guide to the essential albums of the most enduring performers of rock. To qualify for inclusion in this series, an act must have

STEVIE WONDER

Michael Jackson reaped credit in 1983 for recruiting heavy rock guitarist Eddie Van Halen to play the solo on "Beat It". But, as with so many aspects of black popular music, it was Stevie Wonder - the original Motown child-star - who got there first, when he hired Jeff Beck to play the guitar on Talking Book in 1972. Indeed, ever since his 1963 debut, aptly titled *The Gemini*, Wonder has proved an astonishingly innovative writer and performer. Using state-of-the-art technology he has woven searing messages of social concern into the fabric of many an essential party record. With an outstanding run of albums including *Innervisions* (1973), *Fulfillingness' First Finale* (1974) and *Greatest Hits* (1976), he redefined the role of black music in the rock market place. Original *Musiquarium I* (1982) scooped up the cream of that golden era from 1972 to 1982: "Superstition", "Living for the City", "You are the Sunshine of my Life" and "Sir Duke", among many others.



Innovative: Wonder

YES

As prime architects of the notion that advanced musical technique might profitably be applied to the writing and playing of popular music, Yes chartered an eventful course through the choppy waters of progressive rock. They came to prominence with *The Yes Album* (1971), a body of work heavily laden with complex harmonic structures, abrupt changes of tempo, and florid lyrical metaphors. Once this ostensible formula had been greeted with popular acclaim there was no stopping them. The interminably meandering title track of *Close to the Edge* (1972) was but a taster for the neo-classical, four-sided "concept" album, *Relics from Topographic Oceans* (1973). They could go no further, and after a deluge of solo projects, returned to (relative) basics with *Gone with the One* (1977). In the wake of innumerable personnel changes the band emerged in the 1980s as a more vigorous mainstream rock act, and enjoyed great success with *90125* (1983) from which "Owner of a Lonely Heart" was a No 1 hit in America.

NEXT WEEK: Frank Zappa, ZZ Top

NOWHERE, outside the clouder fringes of heavy metal, does one find album titles as whimsical as Jan Garbarek's. After *All Those Born Wah Wings* and *Legend Of The Seven Dreams*, I Took Up The Runes has a whiff of Monty Python about it.

If Keith Jarrett is the biggest seller on the ECM roster, Garbarek best articulates the label's philosophy. Ethereal and introspective, his work stands outside the mainstream of contemporary jazz. While others are intent on stacking the chord progressions ever higher, the Norwegian saxophonist strips his compositions to the bare minimum. Folk songs are his main inspiration.

But the style has its drawbacks. Once again, Garbarek sometimes seems content with tenuous gestures, modal patterns drained of spontaneity. His themes often sound like preludes for longer and more substantial works. Which explains, perhaps, why he is so popular with the New Age set.

Still, he is surrounded by exceptional players. The pivotal figure is Nana Vasconcelos, whose percussion adds tropical warmth to Garbarek's glacial tenor and soprano. I Took Up The Runes makes

RECORDS: JAZZ/ROCK

Preludes to a New Age

Jan Garbarek: *I Took Up The Runes* (ECM 1419)
Paul Desmond: *Easy Living* (RCA/Bluebird NDB2366)
Madonna: *The Immaculate Collection* (Sire WX 370)
The Cure: *Mixed Up* (Fiction FDXLP 18)
Run-DMC: *Back From Hell* (Profile FILER 401)

rather more use of synthesizers and vocals than Garbarek's past recordings. Long-time admirers will be well satisfied, even if others remain lukewarm.

Though the late Paul Desmond was more than a match for Garbarek in terms of introspection, he could never be accused of superficiality. *Easy Living*, a beguiling compilation from sessions between 1963 and 1965, sets the alto saxophonist alongside ideal partners in the guitarist Jim Hall and MJQ drummer Connie Kay. The bass duties are shared between Percy Heath, Eugen Cherico and Desmond's colleague from the Dave Brubeck Quartet, Eugene Wright.

There is a touch of hard blowing on "Blues For Fum", but for the most part the mood is relaxed. The previous release on Bluebird - Desmond's collaboration with Gerry Mulligan, *Two of a Mind* - set a high enough standard, but *Easy Living* goes a step further.

CLIVE DAVIS

NOW that her live show has turned into a Bacchanalian cabaret, it is easy to forget that Madonna used to be the Kyrie of her day. The excitable sleeve notes of her first greatest hits retrospective, *The Immaculate Collection*, describe her early records as music that "literally shook the world". However, listening again to the pert pop arrangements of "Holiday", "Borderline", "Material Girl" and

"Crazy for You", they sound more like songs that were designed to shake the teenybop money tree.

Nevertheless, Madonna began seriously to buck the system around the time of her 1986 album, *True Blue*, taking a grip on the songwriting and production reins, and broadening her market with the controversy of "Papa Don't Preach" and the lush romantic hit of "La Isla Bonita".

With several omissions ("Who's That Girl", "True Blue", "Causing a Commotion" and others), *The Immaculate Collection* is a tidy summary of events up to this year's No 1, "Vogue". It comes with two new songs: a steamy funk-up, "Justify My Love", and a darkly confessional disco-soul lullaby, "Rescue Me", both some way removed from the curvy fare with which she launched herself.

The Cure, too, have had a long, weird trip, from novices on the art-rock wing of the New Wave in 1978 to exalted dignitaries of the goth movement in 1990. Their album, *Mixed Up*, is an attempt at a little relaxed tinkering with recorded history using the device of the extended remix.

Much of their recent output already has the lingering, repetitive, linear quality that is so beloved of patrons of all-night dancefloors. For most of the time, *Mixed Up* just stretches out the raw material - "Lullabye", "Fascination Street", "Lovesong", and others - into long, hypnotic, mantra-like drones levelling out the highs and lows in the process.

Run-DMC have lost the plot completely on *Back From Hell*. Originators of the harder-than-shock school of rap, they have long been overtaken for sheer nastiness by Public Enemy and the gangster elements at large on the West Coast, while the softer "daisy age" rap of De La Soul and Jungle Brothers now offers a more modern and appealing alternative. Squeezed uncomfortably between these two extremes, their bawling and cussing now sounds like the primitive work of very desperate men.

DAVID SINCLAIR

BRIEFING

Return of the alien

A SCULPTURE by Russell de Rozario - which shows an alien wearing a Margaret Thatcher mask apparently ravishing a map of Britain - is back on display in Luton Library after the county leisure committee reversed an earlier decision to remove it. Two weeks ago, the sculpture was taken out of the *North Meets South* exhibition, which ends tomorrow, following a complaint from the local Tory MP, Graham Bright. But now the work stands on its own, all the other exhibitors having removed their pieces as a protest against what they saw as political censorship. De Rozario, meanwhile, is claiming compensation for damage done to his sculpture during its removal.

Silent gem

CINEMA magic moves in to the Dominion Theatre on December 7 and 8 as part of the *Thames Silents* presenta-

tion at the London Film Festival. There will be two evening performances of Raymond Bernard's astonishing historical drama, *The Chess Player*, with the original 1936 score by Henri Rabaud conducted by Carl Davis. The *Thames Silents* began ten years ago by making the world take notice of *Napoleon*, the long-lost French masterpiece; this anniversary show should do the same for Bernard's vivid tale of revolution, Catherine the Great and a mysterious mechanical chess player.

Last chance . . .

SURAYA Hilal wanted to show the world that traditional Egyptian dance has more to offer than the tacky "belly dancing" image of cabarets. She went back to the tradition handed down from mothers to daughters, polished its technique applied creative imagination and her own exceptional performing skills. The result is a dance form as brilliant, as hard and as expressive as any other. Catch her at Sadler's Wells (071-278 8916) until tomorrow.

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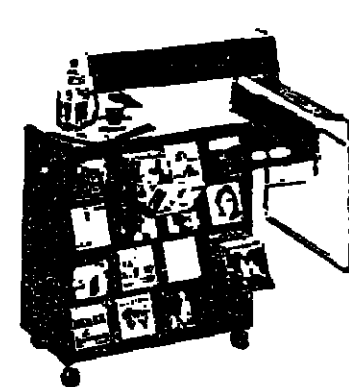
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Thatcher confident of first round win

Continued from page 1
manic effect on the Tory standing, by saying that the figures demonstrate only that there is no great love of Labour's programme and that the position will turn round under Mrs Thatcher's leadership, too, as soon as the economy improves. There were indications last night that the leadership election rules could be changed to prevent future challenges to Conservative prime ministers in office.

The Thatcher team led by George Younger, the former defence secretary, is confident that it has the machinery to determine where the doubters are and that there are not enough of them for Mr Heseltine to force a second ballot. They are talking of "putting the issue to bed completely" next Tuesday. But Mr Heseltine's supporters say that he already has the backing of more than 100 MPs and is picking up support from "surprising quarters".

Sir Neil Macfarlane, who yesterday proposed Mr Heseltine for the leadership, said he was the man who would keep the Conservatives in power. It was a pity that the contest was having to take place and that Mrs Thatcher had not listened to soundings and retired gracefully. Sir Peter Tapsell, who seconded him, said that Mr Heseltine was "the man to heal the wounds". An essential plank of the former defence secretary's programme was that he did not intend to have an "us and them" approach.

Mr Lamont was among the ministers rushing to Mrs Thatcher's support yesterday when he told the Bruges group: "Margaret Thatcher's approach will secure Britain's interests and the real interests of people throughout the community. Neither that nor the cause of a free and liberal Europe will be served by European policy based on surrender on the instalment plan." Mr Lamont called the Delors plan for monetary union unworkable and predicted the collapse of monetary co-operation if a single currency were imposed. There must be real fears of attempts to create a federal Europe: there could not for long be a single currency without a single government.

Nicholas Ridley, the former trade secretary who is one of Mrs Thatcher's staunchest allies, urged people to support her "through thick and thin", saying that 80 per cent of Britons probably backed the Thatcher line on Europe.

Mr Ridley, who resigned in July after outspoken remarks about German ambitions and the power of the European Commission, attacked "power-hungry Eurocrats" when he spoke to Conservatives in Amber Valley. "Think: appointed, not elected, responsible to no-one, accountable to no-one, on the verge of taking control of 12 nations — what a shock to find them iron-fisted by that tiresome Iron Lady from Britain. No wonder they turn on her with personal abuse."



Tip of troubles: two Muscovites sifting through a rubbish heap outside Moscow for food as the nation faces crippling shortages

EC may step in to save ancient London wood

By MICHAEL MCCARTHY, ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

THE European Commission is likely to intervene in the Department of Transport's plans to build a motorway crossing over the Thames in east London which will damage a protected ancient woodland. The move would be without precedent, would have wide implications for other such schemes and would provoke both government anger and delight from environmentalists.

Carlo Ripa di Meana, the environment commissioner, is likely to tell Chris Patten, the environment secretary, that he and Cecil Parkinson, the transport secretary, must carry out an environmental impact assessment of the east London river crossing scheme, which has aroused great opposition because of the damage it will do to Oxleas Wood, the finest example of ancient woodland left in London and a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

If he does, his intervention will have a direct bearing on the department's plans to push the M3 motorway through Twyford Down in Hampshire. It may also affect other projects in the pipeline in the £12 billion roads programme, which has been fiercely criticised by the National Trust and the Royal Society for Nature Conservation for the damage it will allegedly cause to the environment. They include the M11 link road in east London and the A34 Newbury by-pass in Berkshire.

Last night Peter Price, the

Conservative Euro MP for south-east London, said he had asked Signor Ripa di Meana to intervene last week. "I shall be delighted if he reacts positively. It will be the right decision. There has been continuous woodland on this site for eight thousand years and there has to be a far stronger argument than I have yet heard before we allow it to be cut through."

Signor Ripa di Meana's officials are taking issue with the transport department over the interpretation of the EC environmental impact assessment directive of 1985, which requires elaborate evaluations of the environmental consequences of major construction schemes. The directive was given force in English law by the Highways (Assessment of Environmental Effects) Regulations of

July 21 1988, which require assessments for all road schemes decided on after that date.

The British regulations say that the decision to go ahead is when the initial orders proposing the scheme are made, which in the case of the east London river crossing was in 1984. However, Brussels lawyers say that relevant decision is the final go-ahead, which in the case of the crossing was a letter from Mr Parkinson dated one week after the regulations were published. Consultations are continuing, but senior Brussels sources suggested last night that Signor Ripa di Meana would write to Mr Patten reminding him of Britain's legal obligations under the directive, which to disregard would invite prosecution in the European court.

The transport department would not comment last night on how the crossing scheme might be affected by an order from Brussels to carry out an environmental assessment, or on whether such a move would necessitate a new public inquiry.

However, it would be likely to have a direct bearing on other schemes, principally the M3 extension through Twyford Down. Last month in the High Court Mr Justice McCullough rejected the argument that an environmental assessment had been necessary in European law, saying that the directive did not apply to schemes in the pipeline.



Patten: under fire over plans affecting Oxleas Wood

UK fund to help Moscow

Continued from page 1

assistance to Moscow. If the European Community decides to do so, Britain will make its contribution, but it feels priority should be given to the efforts by the Group of 24 nations to assist some East European nations.

Some in the Foreign Office feel that despite Moscow's problems it is far from being short of money. This view is not shared in Washington, where there are fears that the administration is considering giving or selling large quantities of US grain to the Soviet Union or to individual republics. It has discussed the plan with other Western nations, but has not yet received a formal request from its former Cold War adversary.

There has been some criticism in Washington of a plan which could be seen as an attempt to rescue President Gorbachev, but the administration appears unworried by this.

Britain has no such concerns, as Mrs Thatcher has never hidden her wish to encourage Mr Gorbachev. The British move is understood to follow repeated requests from Moscow. It might have seemed sensible to wait until next month, when President Gorbachev is expected to meet Mrs Thatcher or her successor to sign a friendship and co-operation agreement. But Moscow was pressing for a reply and London felt it could delay no longer.

Political sketch

Awfully jolly high jinks in the dorm

HERE at the House of Commons, MPs on the government benches have been finding it hard to settle down. It is rather like the atmosphere at boarding school after word gets round that a couple of the prefects have been caught smoking behind the cycle sheds. Nobody can concentrate on lessons.

Teachers keep dealing with questions from scholars, armed with sheets of notes. But nobody has done their prep; nobody is thinking about the syllabus, ink pellets are flying, and some of the boys at the back are making rude noises whenever teacher isn't looking. A senior boy has done something unspeakable. Just the name — Heseltine — is enough to set them off, and of course almost everybody disapproves — in public, at least.

But the truth is that it's rather fun. It has been a long and tedious term, and this has broken the monotony. Whispers fill the air. Giggles echo in the corridors.

Heseltine has not been appearing in class for some time, now. Some say that he's been sent home but the prevailing murmur is that he's at large in the town: on the loose and making trouble. At break, noses are pressed to the railings, for sight or sound of the boy. At lessons, eyes keep straying to the windows.

"Are you listening, Clelland? What have I just been saying?" Mr Waddington, the senior civics master, tackled a disobedient boy. Well, not the Rt Hon David Waddington, home secretary, was facing David Clelland, the Labour MP for Tyne Bridge, who had asked about the merger of Sky with BS2. Waddington told Clelland to consider the meaning of the ownership provisions of the broadcasting act.

But the class had other things on its mind. Anthony Coombs (C. Wyre Forest), a quiet and helpful boy, tried an intelligent question about sentencing. But it was useless. From the back of the class, young Banks (Lab, Newham NW) piped up with a

question which was ostensibly about the sentencing of "people who use sexist and offensive language on cellphones" but in fact referred to a report that one of the junior prefects, Needham, R, had called the headmistress a "cow", and been made to apologise. Everyone laughed.

This lesson was drawing to a close as Peter Lloyd, one of Mr Waddington's junior teachers, was reminding students of the "law requiring bicycles to be adequately lit during the hours of darkness" and in walked the headmistress herself, dressed in deep purple.

It was almost time for her study period. She oversees these on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons: two short sessions designed to keep her in touch with the classroom. Such had been the turmoil in her school in recent days that most of the boys were expecting a stormy session, for she flies off soon for a short visit to France and there are rumours that the board of governors is to meet in her absence. She might, it is rumoured, be returning Economy Class. This, they thought, could be her last showdown.

But there was no showdown. The old girl still commands considerable respect, and habits of obedience die hard. Besides, she looked remarkably assured: assured that some began to wonder whether the weekend shenanigans had just been some kind of adolescent spree.

The chief rabble-rouser, Neil, asked her some pointed questions about goings-on in the staff room but the headmistress stonewalled. Other students like Ivan Lawrence (from Burton) and David Ashby (from Leicestershire NW) urged her to carry on with her good work and, by the time she sailed out of class, nerves in the old school had steadied a little.

There'll be more loose talk in the dorm, of course, after lights out. But come the dawn, the school bell, and assembly, will it all melt with the shadows? After yesterday, that seemed possible.

MATTHEW PARRIS

Antarctic policy switch

By OUR ENVIRONMENT CORRESPONDENT

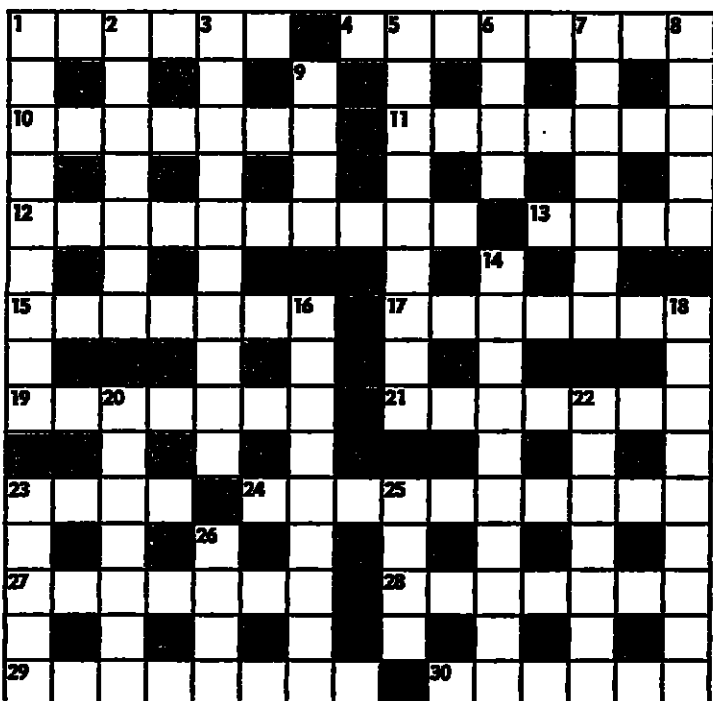
BRITAIN has dropped its opposition to the idea of making Antarctica a world park for science where mining and oil drilling would be banned, in a significant switch of policy before next week's international meeting in Chile on Antarctic environmental protection.

Tristan Garel-Jones, minister of state at the Foreign Office, said yesterday that Britain would "exclude nothing" in a search for consensus at the three-week meeting, and John Heap, head of the polar regions section, said: "There is no rigid opposition to the idea of

a world park". The government has hitherto seemed intent on clinging to the 1988 Antarctic Minerals Convention, which forbids mining for the first time, in spite of the fact that an increasing number of countries, led by Australia and France, have turned their backs on it in favour of making the continent an international reserve where no mineral exploitation would be allowed.

Britain was beginning to look increasingly isolated and the Foreign Office has received more than 1,000 letters from the public questioning its stance.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 18,453



- ACROSS**
- 1st of August and 1st of March accepted by priests (6).
 - It's safe to criticize ageing youth (5,3).
 - Silas ate one with salt (7).
 - Popular fellow finally put second (7).
 - Petition from a whole circle of people (5,5).
 - Bring about the downfall of a beautiful girl (4).
 - Shed a little light on song about America — Dvorak's first (7).
 - Stuffy, 'aving no thatch (7).
 - Meeting house managed to make a come-back (7).
 - East German capital rejected the French honour (7).
 - Talking forbidden for musicians (4).
 - Drink left out, we hear, in the rain (6,4).
- DOWN**
- 27 Is due to change? Unlikely! (7).
 - 28 In love with woman we dominate (7).
 - 29 Instruments providing dance music (8).
 - 30 In the middle of a film, diamonds are hidden (6).
- Solution to Puzzle No 18,452**
- PEMBROKE NIJACK
PACOT XISJ
GIVINC OPTIGIAN
OAGUUSI
NATOEIO
BEACH HANSOMCAR
AERATSON
BINDERAINANTRA
AOGINSSE
LAINING BEAMINAL
OAGUUSI
OAGUUSI
TUNOROR
EXEUNT CADARENE

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

- HOUSTON**
a. A Texas soldier
b. An American president
c. An Australian colonist
- NORRISH**
a. A French pianist
b. A Dutch admiral
c. A Cambridge chemist
- ORD**
a. An orthographic mark
b. A Viking adventurer
c. A jazz musician
- DUGUIT**
a. A Scottish philanthropist
b. A French jurist
c. A Canadian politician
- Answers on page 22

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M-ways/roads M4-M11, 732
M-ways/roads M1-Dartford, 733
M-ways/roads Dartford-T. M25 734
M-ways/roads M25-M4, 735
M25 London Orbital only, 736

National traffic and roadworks
National motorways, 737
West Country, 738
Wales, 739
Midlands, 740
East Angles, 741
North-west England, 742
North-east England, 743
Scotland, 744
Northern Ireland, 745

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WEATHER

Southern England will be cloudy with mist and drizzle over the hills and southern western coasts. Brief sunny spells are likely in sheltered eastern districts. Rain over Northern Ireland and southern Scotland will extend southwards over Wales, northern, central and eastern England. Clearer, showery weather will follow with many places in the east becoming dry. Outlook: changeable.

ABROAD

MEDDAY: Monday, 6-20-2023, 10:00:00 AM			MEDDAY: Monday, 6-20-2023, 10:00:00 AM		
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Algeria	28	82	Algeria	27	83
Algeria	5	41	Algeria	28	84
Algeria	11	33	Algeria	29	85
Algeria	14	57	Algeria	30	86
Algeria	15	58	Algeria	31	87
Algeria	16	59	Algeria	32	88
Algeria	17	60	Algeria	33	89
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Algeria	24	67	Algeria	40	96
Algeria	25	68	Algeria	41	97
Algeria	26	69	Algeria	42	98
Algeria	27	70	Algeria	43	99
Algeria	28	71	Algeria	44	00
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Algeria	59	02	Algeria	75	31
Algeria	60	03	Algeria		

Cater Allen payout is raised 15%

CATER Allen is lifting its interim dividend by 15 per cent to 6p after a "significantly larger" profit in the six months to end-October.

The discount house benefited from the one-point cut in interest rates last month, while its money broking and Jersey operations did well. Profits were boosted from the interest earned on the £14 million Cater raised in a rights issue last summer. Cater, like other discount houses, is exempted from reporting detailed interim figures.

Analysts now expect Cater to easily beat the net profit of £7.4 million it made last year. **UniChem debut**

About 4,400 retail chemists made "paper fortunes" as UniChem shares touched 127p on their first day of trading on the London stock market. UniChem's pharmacist customers saw an immediate profit of 1,200 per cent.

Locker higher

Thomas Locker (Holdings) lifted pre-tax profits from £944,000 to £1.05 million in the half-year to end-September. Earnings per share rose from 1.32p to 1.64p. The interim dividend is maintained at 0.5p.

Sotheby's loss

Sotheby's, the auction house, reporting on a traditionally quiet third quarter, shows a pre-tax loss of \$5.4 million — down from an \$8.3 million loss last year — for the three months ended September.

Concentric rise

Concentric lifted pre-tax profits by 13 per cent to £9.2 million in the year to end-September. Earnings per share rose from 27.23p to 28.40p. The final dividend is 7.63p (6.55p), making 11p (9.36p).

Bennett warning

Shares in Bennett & Fountain Group fell 5p to 10p after the company gave warning that the results for the year to end-June would be "materially below expectations".

Amax purchase

Amax, the American energy and resources group, is to buy Ladd Petroleum from General Electric of America for \$515 million.

Volvo falls 63%

Volvo, the Swedish vehicle maker, reports a 63 per cent slump in profits to 2.26 billion kronor (£208 million) in the first nine months of this year.

Royal suffers record £91m loss as house claims soar

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

ARSON attacks and house subsidence claims pushed Royal Insurance into a record-breaking loss of £91 million in the nine months to end-September, compared with a £125 million pre-tax profit last year, while the group's solvency has slumped to a 16-year low.

Ian Rushton, the chief executive, gave warning that the losses would mean job cuts and premium increases. "The premiums we receive must give a proper expectation of attaining profit," he said. "This takes priority over market share."

The group's motor premiums were increased by 10 per cent at the start of the month, the second rise this year. Mr Rushton said house structure rates would also have to rise by a tenth, with even steeper increases due on commercial motor and property policies.

The group has cut its staff by 250 so far this year and Mr Rushton said there would be further significant job losses. Despite the losses, Royal's share price rose 17p to 390p on hopes of higher premiums. Investors were also en-

couraged by the group's statement that it was not considering a rights issue despite a 29 per cent fall in its reserves, and the lower losses in America.

Royal has been hit by 6,300 subsidence claims, caused by the dry summer, almost double last year's total. The value of the claims has risen 77 per cent, to an average £12,000 each, as houses suffered the effect of two dry winters and hot summers.

Claims are still coming in, and analysts expect subsidence losses to total £130 million in the full year.

Commercial property losses rose from £22 million to £37 million. Mr Rushton said the increase in arson claims was "obviously connected" with the downturn in the economy. Analysts were encouraged by a fall in losses at the group's American subsidiary from £78 million to £69 million. "The company is certainly getting its act together in the US," said Steven Bird, an insurance analyst at Smith New Court.

"But it will be some while before we can say it is out of the woods." There is no third quarter dividend.



Premiums warning: Ian Rushton yesterday

News Corp profits dip 3% in first quarter

By OUR CITY STAFF

PROFITS of The News Corporation, the international media group that owns The Times, fell 3 per cent to Aus\$65.1 million (£26 million) before tax in the first three months to end-September on a 41 per cent increase in turnover to Aus\$2.78 billion. Earnings, before abnormal items, fell 31 per cent to Aus\$25.9 million, but there were abnormal profits of Aus\$29 million.

The results encompass a 68 per cent rise in American trading profits to Aus\$262 million, stagnant profits of Aus\$91 million from Australia and the Pacific Basin and a decline from profits of Aus\$63 million to losses of Aus\$21 million in Britain.

The downturn in Britain reflects the inclusion of Sky Television for three months, compared with one month a year ago. The results also include the Harper Collins book publishing interests, which became wholly owned from June and account for most of the increase in net interest payments from Aus\$218 million to Aus\$283 million.

News Corp says the merger of Sky Television and BSBS will substantially reduce future costs of building the investment and ensure a return to profits in Britain for the rest of the year.

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

HMC buys mortgage book from Chase

THE Household Mortgage Corporation has bought the £200 million mortgage book of Chase Manhattan Bank. The centralised lender paid a premium of about 1 per cent for the business and is expected to announce further acquisitions soon. The 3,700-4,000 borrowers should benefit from the transfer of loans as the 16.25 per cent mortgage rate will be reduced by at least 1 per cent.

An HMC spokesman said that Chase's mortgage arrears were "not bad" and the mortgage book fitted in with HMC's existing business. Chase has also put its Visa credit card business up for sale but has not attracted a buyer. The credit card market has suffered from overcapacity in the past year and Chase, which pays interest on credit balances and charges a lower rate of interest than most of the big providers, is likely to be feeling the squeeze more than its rivals.

Profits surge at Hartstone

HARTSTONE Group, the handbag, leather goods and hosiery group that has been transformed by a new management team, saw pre-tax profits surge from £677,000 to £2.26 million in the six months to end-September. Turnover leapt from £5.56 million to £25.4 million boosted by acquisitions and about 10 per cent organic growth. There is an improved interim dividend of 1.25p (0.75p).

Tomkinsons at £1.58m

PRE-TAX profits at Tomkinsons, the Worcestershire carpet manufacturer, declined from £3.76 million to £1.58 million in the year to September 29, in difficult market conditions. The group, which mainly supplies carpets for residential use, saw turnover fall from £28 million to £24.3 million. Earnings per share plunged from 40.5p to 16.6p. The final dividend stays at 8p, making an unchanged 11.5p.

Solid year at Gleeson

MJ GLEESON Group, the housebuilder and contractor, saw pre-tax profits rise changed at £1.67 million, against £1.63 million, in the year to end-June despite the difficult times in the construction industry. Gleeson is paying a 7.94p final dividend, making a total of 9.36p (10.77p). Turnover was ahead from £134 million to £166 million but was not matched by a corresponding rise in trading profit because of the need for further provisions against land values. The group had the benefit of a £108,000 rise in rental income to £2.78 million and a £239,000 increase in interest received to £875,000.

Rexmore up to £524,000

REXMORE, the Liverpool supplier of upholstery, textiles and timber, lifted pre-tax profits from £503,000 to £524,000 in the six months to September 29. Disposals led to a 14 per cent decline in turnover to £20.7 million, although turnover for the retained businesses was ahead by 12 per cent. The interim dividend is maintained at 0.7p. The shares were unchanged at 25p.

Sanders finds good niche

SANDERS & Sidney, the USM executive counselling service which gains a significant part of its business by advising redundant City employees and displaced executives seeking relocation, lifted pre-tax profits from £238,000 to £584,000 in the six months to end-September. Turnover rose from £1.45 million to £2.94 million. The interim dividend is 3.45p (2.3p).

McLeod Russel slips

A SHARP increase in net interest received, from £957,000 to £3.12 million, coupled with £2.1 million proceeds from the sale of a warehouse, helped limit the slide in pre-tax profits at McLeod Russel Holdings, the surface coatings, textiles and property group. Profits in the year ended September were £7.75 million, compared with £8.74 million.

The group suffered from lower vehicle registrations and raw material price increases, but operations achieved profits of £5.83 million compared with £6.13 million. The final dividend rises from 2.75p to 3.05p, making 5.8p (5.25p). The shares were unchanged at 78p.

Drexel accused of bribery and fraud

FROM JOHN DURIE IN NEW YORK

AMERICAN savings and loan regulators have accused Drexel Burnham Lambert Group, the failed investment bank, of "bribery, coercion, extortion and fraud" in a \$6.8 billion claim against the group to recover money the regulators say was lost by about 50 failed savings banks.

The claim was made to the federal bankruptcy court, whose deadline for all claims against the firm has now expired. Drexel filed for bankruptcy earlier this year.

The regulators, the Resolution Trust Corp and Federal Deposit Insurance Corp said Drexel "plundered savings and loans through bribery,

coercion, extortion, fraud and other illegal means". They claimed Drexel bribed executives of savings and loan associations who invested in junk bonds to maintain the appearance of a market for illiquid junk bonds.

The agency said the claims were in respect of 40 institutions now under government control and the regulators said their claim would be updated as its investigations continued. Only 5.3 per cent of thrifts invested in junk bonds.

The regulators said they intended to file claims personally against Michael Milken, the former Drexel junk bond chief.

LIT agrees refinance package

LIT Holdings, the troubled financial services group, has agreed a £26.2 million refinancing with its bankers. The package will save the group £2 million in interest costs and allow it to start paying dividends again.

The refinancing is a victory by Christopher Castleman, the chairman, to restore the company's balance sheet. LIT has struggled for more than a year to reduce its debt from £71 million to £25 million, helped by disposals.

The rest of the debt was until now repayable in June next year. Mr Castleman said this was "unstable and extremely costly" and had frightened business away from LITAM, the group's futures clearing house in the America.

RBS may call off \$149m bank buy

By OUR BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE ROYAL Bank of Scotland may withdraw its \$149 million bid for Bank Worcester in the United States unless the American bank can reduce its bad debt portfolio by early next year.

The Royal Bank bid for Bank Worcester in February. The terms allowed it to pull out if Bank Worcester's non-performing assets were still above \$50 million by the time the Royal Bank's takeover received regulatory approval. The regulators' decision is due by January 15.

Since then, however Bank Worcester's shares have slid dramatically on Nasdaq, America's screen-based stock market, to as low as \$9 a share,

and are currently about \$11, compared with the \$22.50 bid price, as worries grow that the bank cannot hit the target.

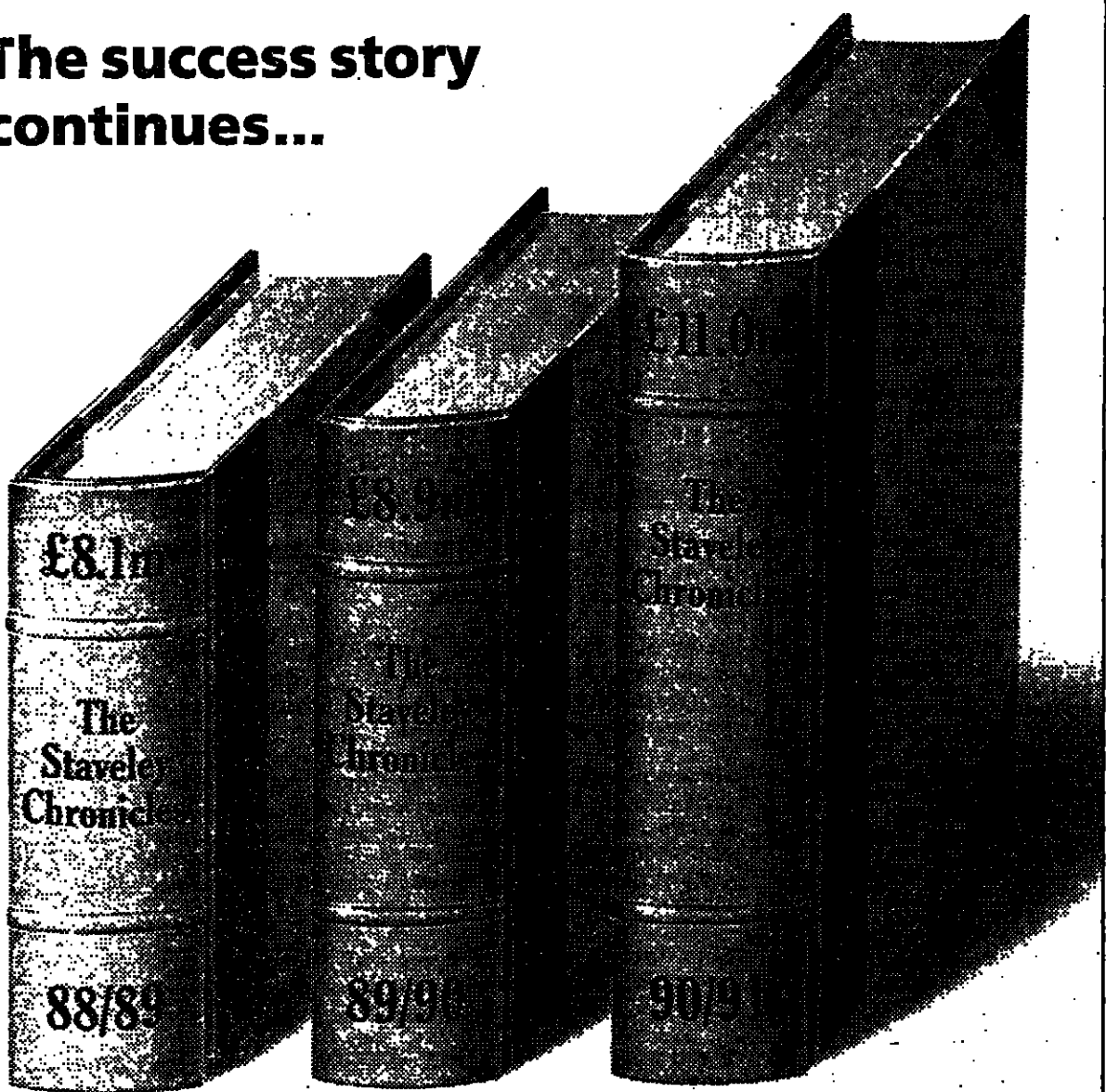
The Royal Bank refused to comment on whether it was thinking of pulling the bid.

Bank Worcester has revealed that its non-performing loans were still worth \$68 million at the end of September. The bank suffered a \$6.2 million net loss in the first nine months of the year due to worsening problems in the New England property market.

It is believed the Royal Bank still wants to buy Bank Worcester, its existing bank in Rhode Island.

INTERIM RESULTS

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Results for the 26 weeks ended 29.9.90

- RECORD PROFIT BEFORE TAX AT £11.0m UP 24%
- EARNINGS PER SHARE 8.2p UP 8%
- INTERIM DIVIDEND 2.3p UP 10%

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Royal Insurance

NINE MONTHS RESULTS 1990

- Pre-tax loss £91m (1989: £125m profit).
- Result remains dominated by worldwide weather losses of £185m and UK subsidence losses of £76m.
- In North America there was a reduced pre-tax loss in the USA and the Canadian operation produced a satisfactory profit.
- Our emphasis remains on the restoration of profitable operations through the basic insurance practice of ensuring adequate prices for the risks underwritten.
- As a consequence of the fallback in most of the world's major stockmarkets Capital and Reserves total £1,797m. The solvency margin of 35% does not include either the embedded value of the existing life business of some £580m or the goodwill of acquired businesses such as Maccabees Life Insurance Company, Lloyd Italico and the estate agency operations.



A full statement for the nine months results for 1990 (of which the above is an extract) will be mailed to all shareholders, and is also available from Group Corporate Relations, Royal Insurance Holdings plc, 1 Cornhill, London EC3V 3OR. Please send me a copy of Royal Insurance's nine months statement.

NAME:

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Small firms 'faring better' in economic downturn

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

SMALL companies in Britain appear to be faring better in the economic decline than larger firms, according to National Westminster Bank.

NatWest says that while small companies are clearly having a difficult time in the present recessionary climate, their position is less severe when compared with larger companies, as measured by surveys such as those produced by the Confederation of British Industry.

NatWest's latest quarterly survey of small businesses, looking at 1,000 companies mostly with an annual sales turnover of less than £750,000, reveals that in the second quarter of this year, small companies were reporting sales and employment growth lower than the previous quarter.

While growth is still there, the balance for sales and employment fell sharply among these small companies by 60 per cent.

Fewer small companies expect their sales to grow in the third quarter. The difference between those forecasting increases and decreases fell from 26 to 16 per cent. For employment, the balance fell from 6 to 2 per cent. NatWest says

that when such figures are compared with those of larger companies, as measured by a recent CBI survey, showing the largest fall in business optimism for a decade, then small companies' expectations are considerably above those for larger firms. They compare with CBI figures of a balance of minus 36 per cent on sales, and of minus 26 per cent on employment.

David Powell, head of the bank's small business service, said: "When unemployment is rising overall, it is heartening to see small businesses still making a positive contribution to the job market. On balance, more surviving firms are growing than contracting, which in itself is a commendable achievement in a difficult market."

● The British Franchise Association says the number of franchised units in operation rose 10 per cent, with annual sales up 11 per cent to £5.24 billion in the 12 months to June 1990.

● Self-building in the housing market is expanding. *Build It* magazine says that while completions on house building fell 13 per cent in 1989-90, the number of completed self-build houses rose 8.5 per cent.

Staveley at record £11m

By OUR CITY STAFF



Confident: Brian Kent expects a satisfactory year

STAVELEY Industries, the British tool and measuring equipment company, lifted pre-tax profits 24 per cent to a record £11 million in the half year to the end of September, on turnover 27 per cent higher at £162.8 million.

The increase in sales and profitability reflected a maiden contribution from Howe Richardson, a manufacturer of weighing equipment based in America but with substantial European interests, acquired in April for £21.8 million.

There is an interim dividend of 2.3p a share, against 2.1p last time, payable from earnings of 8.2p a share, compared with 7.6p in the same period last year.

Earnings for the first half of the previous financial year have been restated after the £27.4 million rights issue which accompanied the acquisition of Howe Richardson.

The interest charge was reduced from £1.5 million to £1.3 million, reflecting the favourable impact of foreign currency borrowings. Costs of restructuring at Salter Springs & Pressings, a subsidiary, have been charged as an extraordinary item of £2 million.

Brian Kent, the chairman, said that operations in Britain and continental Europe had performed more strongly than those in America, which had been adversely affected by the weaker dollar.

In the current economic environment, he said it was "impossible to forecast with accuracy what the next six months might hold".

Graham Wood hit by tighter margins

By PHILIP PANGALOS

THE slowdown in the construction industry resulted in a decline in half-year profits at Graham Wood, the contracting and construction group. Pre-tax profits slipped from £285,000 to £607,000 in the six months to end-September.

The group saw turnover advance from £15.6 million to £24.6 million, largely due to first-time contributions from acquisitions.

Tom Goldberg, chairman, said that the group's order book "still looks good".

He said: "Orders in hand are worth about £20 million, which should see us through to next spring."

Interest costs jumped from £100,000 to £352,000 with gearing "slightly in excess" of 100 per cent although the company hopes to reduce it to 80 per cent by the year-end. Earnings per share fell from 17p to 11.2p, with fully diluted earnings down from 14.7p to 10.8p. The interim dividend is maintained at 3p.

The closure costs of Structural Fireproofers resulted in an extraordinary loss of £175,000.

There was an exceptional debit of £2,000.

Mr Goldberg said he does not expect any immediate improvement in the difficult trading conditions, although the strategy of broadening the group's activities, including looking at possible European opportunities, gives it greater strength.

Half-time profits more than halved at 600 Group

By MARTIN BARROW

THE 600 Group, a manufacturer of machine tools based in Staines, Middlesex, is cutting its interim dividend from 2.46p to 1.5p after a slump in pre-tax profits from £4.4 million to £1.7 million in the six months to the end of September. Earnings a share tumbled from 5.8p to 2.5p.

There was an extraordinary charge of £603,000, representing further provisions to cover the cost of the company's withdrawal from Iraq.

The withdrawal began last year, before the invasion of Kuwait, resulting in an initial charge of £4.5 million.

The company gave a warning in September that this year's trading profits would not meet expectations because of lower demand for its machine tools, lasers and optical equipment.

Since then "strenuous efforts" have been made to minimise the effects of the recession and rationalisation costs during the first half totalled £754,000.

Turnover slipped from £77 million to £72 million and operating profits from £5.3 million to £3.3 million.

The interest charge climbed from £862,000 to £1.65 million, although gearing is expected to be reduced to 30 per cent of shareholders' funds by the year-end, against 32 per cent at the end of the previous 12 months.

Platinum demand forecast to rise

By COLIN CAMPBELL

PHYSICAL demand for platinum, as opposed to investment demand, remains strong, and western world demand should be 120,000 ounces higher at 3.6 million ounces in 1990, Johnson Matthey, the precious metals group, said in its interim review of the metal.

Supply is set to reach 3.67 million ounces this year, outstripping demand for the first time in years by 70,000 ounces, and recessionary fears are likely to see platinum's price only trade between \$400 and \$475 an ounce in the next six months, against earlier hopes of a trading range of between \$470 and \$520.

Johnson Matthey predicts that by 1995 up to an additional million ounces of platinum will be required, and big South African producers have already started mine expansion in preparation.

In the longer term, platinum demand will be further stimulated by developments in frontier technologies.

The metal's role in emission controls is well entrenched and there will be new openings for its use as world economies open up and develop.

Johnson Matthey says the Japanese petroleum refining industry has become a net buyer of platinum for the first time in five years, although investment demand for platinum has been most noticeably weak in Japan.

Soviet platinum sales, after an uncertain start, picked up sharply in June.

ALPHA STOCKS

Vol '000	Vol '000	Vol '000	Vol '000
ADT 1,265	CJ 1,490	Lowth 2,384	Shire 70
Abbey Nat 1,963	Colson 378	Lucas 2,151	Slough 363
Adi-Lyon 3,130	Courtauld 478	Manpower 421	Smith & N 2,315
Amrad 2,335	Dalry 302	M&S 1,788	Sol Beach 846
Anglo 1,175	Deane 750	Maxwell Cn 1,700	Do Ltd 214
Argus 548	ECC 438	MB Group 438	Smith Wt 759
ASDA 587	Emirates 307	MEPC 83	Smiths Int 457
ASR Foods 64	Enfield 4,768	Medway 6,828	STO 1,000
Avon 2,138	Fisons 1,117	Nat West 3,493	Stent Chart 308
BAA 2,300	FG 1,978	Nest 1,905	Storax 1,071
BAT 2,815	Gem Ac 2,191	Nov Food 84	Sun News 3,013
BBC 2,387	GEC 3,347	Pho 1,042	Sun Life 1,458
BAT 4,918	Glen 814	Pearson 1,289	T & N 1,172
Birdseye 1,088	Glyned 133	Pittman 1,291	TI Group 449
Bone 402	Guaranty 754	Robt Pack 1,178	Tanner 2,267
Bower 820	Grand Met 1,894	Prudential 2,186	Tate & Lyle 957
Barfield Int 1,091	Guil A 127	Racal 11,227	Taylor Wood 177
BCC 67	Guil B 8,288	Racal Tele 1,288	TBS 148
Blue Circle 432	Guil C 1,325	Rh Hovis 877	Tesco 2,258
BOC 1,408	Guinness 1,289	Rank 1,289	Thames Wt 730
Boots 1,588	Hamm A 21	R&C 142	Thom EM 716
BPI 1,138	Hamm B 5,898	Redand 1,817	Trainer 724
Br Aero 574	Do Wt 418	Reed 735	THF 1,688
Br Airways 2,402	H & C 548	Rangers 830	Ultramar 1,253
Br Land 3,971	Hewlett 330	Reed Gp 1,400	Unilever 798
Br Land 225	Hilldown 4,315	RTZ 1,605	Unilever 798
Br Petrol 5,085	IMI 418	R-Royce 5,100	United Dis 1,198
Br Steel 3,785	ICI 1,738	Rothman B 217	Unwired News 196
Br Telecom 4,483	ICI 911	Royal Bank 94	Woolson 4,070
Bund 194	Kingfisher 516	Royal Int 5,471	Wynn 562
Burmah Cast 130	Lauria 1,019	Saschi 24	Wessex 654
Burton 27,028	Leathes 5,462	Schroder 712	Wheatley 1,688
C&W 2,539	Land Sec 1,210	Soot & H 574	Wig Tange 1,581
Cadbury 1,367	Lapora 146	Sears 1,004	Williams 722
Cantor 864	LDA 676	Selgwick 1,815	Wile Cor 863
Casham 190	Lloyds 1,688	Selgwick Tm 3,504	Wimpey G 1,342
Costs 278	Lloyds Abb 408	Shet 3,504	

WORLD MARKET INDICES

Index	Value	Daily chg (%)	Yearly chg (%)	Daily chg (%)	Yearly chg (%)	Daily chg (%)	Yearly chg (%)
The World	583.7	-0.5	-33.2	-0.4	-24.8	-0.6	-18.8
(free)	107.6	-0.5	-39.2	-0.5	-24.6	-0.6	-18.8
EAFE	984.3	-0.5	-36.8	-0.6	-32.0	-0.5	-23.2
(free)	101.2	-0.5	-36.9	-0.7	-32.1	-0.5	-23.4
Europe	593.1	0.2	-22.0	0.3	-19.5	0.1	-6.3
(free)	128.4	0.2	-21.5	0.1	-19.2	0.2	-4.6
Nth America	399.2	-0.6	-25.8	-0.6	-8.8	-0.6	-9.9
(free)	1117.7	0.1	-28.2	0.2	-22.9	0.1	-12.8
Pacific	187.9	0.3	-20.1	0.4	-14.7	0.2	-3.0
(free)	2176.5	-1.0	-45.1	-1.3	-39.8	-1.0	-33.3
Far East	3150.1	-1.1	-45.8	-1.4	-40.5	-1.1	-33.9
Australia	233.4	0.2	-31.9	0.2	-15.0	0.1	-7.3
Austria	1512.2	-0.3	-11.7	-0.2	-5.3	-0.4	7.9
Belgium	718.4	-0.8	-27.0	-0.5	-24.1	-0.6	-11.3
Canada	388.9	-0.2	-33.8	-0.3	-18.9	-0.2	-19.3
Denmark	1149.2	0.3	-12.7	0.5	-8.6	0.3	6.1
Finland	85.0	-0.1	-43.6	-0.1	-39.9	-0.1	-31.5
(free)	87.9	0.1	-41.1	0.2	-37.1	0.1	-28.4
France	587.4	-0.5	-26.1	-0.3	-22.6	-0.6	-10.2
Germany	704.7	1.0	-23.2	1.2	-18.5	1.0	-8.7
Hong Kong	1885.4	-0.5	-14.6	-0.5	-8.7	-0.5	3.8
Italy	255.5	-0.2	-33.7	0.0	-28.2	-0.2	-19.5
Japan	3311.2	-1.1	-46.3	-1.4	-41.5	-0.8	-34.8
Netherlands	723.1	-0.2	-23.5	0.0	-18.9	-0.2	-7.1
New Zealand	58.1	-0.8	-45.8	-0.8	-35.5	-0.9	-33.9
Norway	1182.1	-0.7	-14.2	-0.5	-8.5	-0.8	4.3
(free)	203.6	-0.8	-12.9	-0.5	-7.1	-0.7	5.9
Sing/Malay	1387.2	0.2	-31.5	0.0	-25.0	0.1	-16.7
Spain	170.4	-0.2	-28.0	0.0	-24.7	-0.3	-12.5
Sweden	1147.1	0.3	-34.8	0.4	-28.8	0.2	-20.6
(free)	172.0	0.7	-28.0	0.8	-22.7	0.7	-18.7
Switzerland	720.8	-0.7	-21.2	-0.3	-22.2	-0.7	-4.8
(free)	110.2	-0.7	-21.1	-0.4	-22.1	-0.8	-4.1
UK	610.8	0.5	-15.3	0.5	-15.3	0.5	2.9
USA	381.8	-0.8	-25.1	-0.8	-9.0	-0.6	-8.0

(Ref: Local currency)

Source: Morgan Stanley Capital International

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Now Wellcome has developed a neonatal surfactant and help is at hand.

It's a liquid that, once administered, helps to reduce the chance of lung collapse and lets the baby breathe more easily. It can, in fact, be life saving.

This is just one of many products Wellcome has developed.

In addition to the launch of this neonatal surfactant in the USA our 1990 highlights have also included advances in our anti-viral treatments.

These are now being used to treat increasing numbers of HIV positive and AIDS patients around the world and are continuing to gain approvals for a wide range of herpes virus infections. We have also recently launched a treatment

for hepatitis B virus infection in Italy.

From our range of consumer medicines to life saving treatments, our research teams are producing a flow of innovative products.

Their research needs application, ability and good fortune. But the lifeblood of any research is money. Money that can only come from our financial success.

FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

for the financial year ended 1 September 1990

	1990	1989	% increase
Human healthcare sales (£m)	1,469	1,254	17
Profit before tax (£m)	315	283	11
Research and development (£m)	221	182	21
Earnings per share (p)	22.7	19.7	15
Dividends per share (p)	6.5	5.05	29

This year despite the uncertain world economic climate Wellcome invested over £221 million and millions of man hours in research and development.

It's an investment in everyone's future.



Wellcome

The Annual Report will be mailed to shareholders on 7 December. For a copy, write to:
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A part exchange at Burton Group

COMMENT

DAVID BREWERTON

Two million pounds to pay off Sir Ralph Halpern may not sound like value for money to the 50,000 owners of the company; the army of small shareholders who backed the very man being paid off, and the institutions who wanted him out, but not necessarily at any price.

Halpern has increasingly turned from the Burton Group's most valuable asset into something of a liability. So long as he remained in the commanding positions of both chairman and chief executive, the group had little future with the City. The share price was dragged down, not in relation to the failing fortunes of Burton (which are understandable in the present environment), but because of uncertainty over Halpern's future. The question long ago ceased to be "if", and had become "when". The subsidiary question was whether he would leave entirely, or merely give up one of his jobs.

The longer the questions remained unresolved, the more certain became the eventual answer: he would go, and it was merely a matter of talking terms. Faltering performance is only

one of reasons advanced for the dumping of Halpern. More important is that he tried to run Burton as if it were a proprietorship, or at best family business. He had seen at close quarters how Gerald Ronson commanded Heron, but overlooked that Ronson has no share price to undermine, no institutions to answer to and the "right to manage" that comes only with a family business. Other entrepreneurial chief executives who did away with the guiding hand of a strong chairman have suffered the same fate. For others, the day of reckoning is yet to come.

Fund managers probably allowed themselves a quiet smile into their cocoa last night, but as they swept the crumbs of their digestive biscuits from the bed they might have wondered whether Halpern's pay-off was a reasonable price to pay to get Sir John Hoskyns installed as chairman. Hoskyns falls in to the

"great and good" category but has little in his past business career to suggest that he is suited to inherit Halpern's shoes. He made a great deal of noise, and some worthwhile enemies including Robert Maxwell and Lord Plumb, for his bare knuckle attacks last year over the "fiasco" of the single European market. His speeches were seen, both at the time and with the benefit of hindsight, as ill-judged and incoherent, hardly ideal qualifications for leading a company out of trouble.

He was a member of the board of Ferranti when it approved the takeover of International Signal Corporation, a deal which brought Ferranti to the brink of bankruptcy. He sat by the elbow

of Sir Derek Alun-Jones, the Ferranti chairman, and subsequently played a part in his removal when the full extent of the ISC folly became apparent. He was invited by Halpern himself on to the Burton board, and again took part in the removal of his patron.

Meanwhile, there is a near perfect symmetry in Halpern, an unofficial adviser to the prime minister, being ousted on the day that Michael Heseltine challenged for leadership. But there is a jarring element in that Hoskyns is a hangover from the Thatcher years, for he headed her policy unit in the early eighties. That Halpern had to go is beyond dispute, but unless Burton is for sale, the present boardroom

arrangements should not be seen as anything other than temporary.

Tough lady

Michael Heseltine's calls for a politically independent Bank of England may go down well with many industrialists, but if the Old Lady were unleashed completely, interest rates might be higher and manufacturing companies weaker than they are today. That, at least, is the implication of many of the comments in yesterday's Bank of England quarterly bulletin.

Given the unexpected weakness of sterling after ERM entry, and its further sharp fall in the last few days, there can be little doubt that the Bank would strongly oppose any further cuts in interest rates until and unless the pound recovered. In fact, the monetary hawks in the Bank

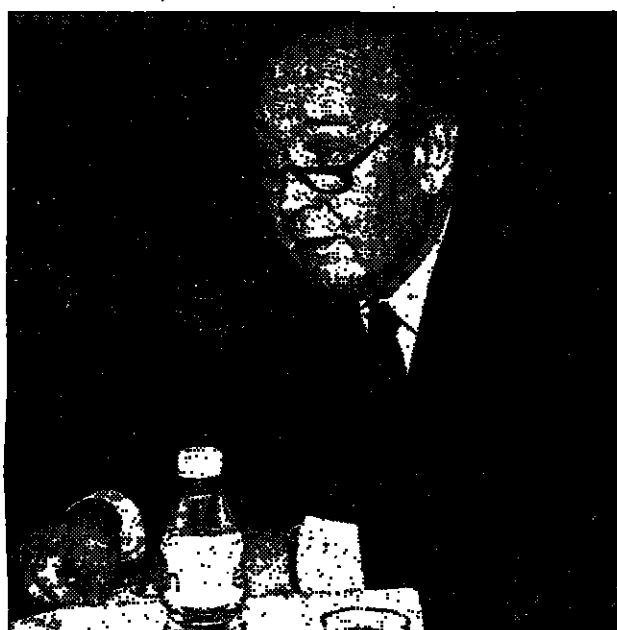
seem to be drawing a perverse pleasure from the way the pound's present weakness is interacting with the threat of a further monetary tightening in Germany before the end of the year. Between them, these two developments would almost certainly rule out another cut in rates before Christmas - if the Bank were in charge of interest rates, which of course it is not, at least under Mrs Thatcher.

The Bank also casts an interesting sidelight on the vexed question of over-gearing in its annual survey of 1,000 top British companies. This shows that the manufacturing sector actually increased its profitability and improved its interest cover between 1988 and 1989. The real financial damage last year was done to the non-manufacturing sector, while the manufacturing sector continued to do well.

Obviously this was too hard on retailers, financiers, housebuilders and consumers. A major objective of ERM entry was to "spread the pressure of adjustment more widely across the corporate sector," the Bank notes.

Wellcome loses its super star status

TEMPUS



Drug sales growth: Sir Alistair Frame, of Wellcome

EVEN the most respected analysts seem to have run away with enthusiasm over Wellcome: hence disappointment with an 11 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £315 million and 15 per cent higher earnings per share of 22.7p for the year to end-August.

Sir Alistair Frame, the chairman, reported good overall growth in healthcare sales of 17 per cent. Within this sales of Wellcome's two main anti-viral drugs - Zovirax, which accounts for a quarter of sales, and Retrovir, with 12 per cent - rose by nearly 28 per cent, in spite of a price cut and reduced dosage of Retrovir, the anti-Aids drug.

The first half flattened to deceive, due to currency gains lost in the second half. Profits would have been about £20 million lower at end-year exchange rates. Margins came under pressure from higher research and costs from American salesforce expansion.

City profit forecasts for 1991-92 are therefore being downgraded for the third time in a few months. Barclays de Zoete Wedd estimates £365 million instead of £440 million, Hoare Govett £350 million (£410 million) and UBS Phillips & Drew £335 million (£420 million). This puts the fall in the shares in perspective. At 384p, they sell at 17 times reported earnings falling to 15 times prospective earnings and yield 2.3 per cent.

Earnings growth should remain in double figures and Retrovir, in particular, still has excellent potential. The new team is also dedicated to restoring margins in a more competitive environment. The shares will remain volatile, due to the relatively narrow market and because Retrovir has an emotional American profile. Wellcome remains a growth company but the loss of its super rating is likely to be permanent.

FKI

IT IS hard not to be impressed with FKI's achievement over the past six months. Lifting interim pre-tax profits from £19.2 million in the second half of last year to £26.3 million in the first of this, a period when not only the

economics of both its key markets ran into near-recession but also the weak dollar was eating into every cent of profit, amounts to some trend-bucking.

When the collapse of the junk bond market scuppered plans to unload its flabby North American operations a year ago, management promptly despatched Norman Scouler, group chief executive, himself, to America to oversee the restructuring.

Several factories and substantial numbers of employees lighter, the North American

operations have almost trebled their contribution, from \$11 million to \$30 million. A further \$2.1 million was lost in currency translation. Cost savings accounted for half the improvement; better pricing for the rest.

The rationalisation may not be over. The American automotive operations, accounting for a third of turnover but only a fifth of profits, sit awkwardly with the new management philosophy founded on niche electrical businesses.

In no less tough conditions, UK profits just failed to hold

their own, at £16.8 million against £17.7 million.

With no relief in the market-place or on the exchanges, FKI will be hard-pressed to match last year's taxable £54.7 million, which would produce earnings of around 8.5p. But the group is in its best shape for years, with sound finances, gearing at just 33 per cent, and a p/e of 6 and yield of 11 per cent, which suggest the share price of 51p is past the worst.

Blenheim Group

A YAWNING trade gap and a weak pound hold few immediate fears for Blenheim Group, the international exhibitions concern. As home-grown companies cut back, foreign businesses muscle in to build market share, and exhibitions provide the ideal platform for their goods and services.

In any case Britain now accounts for just 30 per cent of profits. The balance comes from the Continent, particularly France, where Blenheim's shares are quoted on the Second Marche, and increasingly from America.

The slowdown of the domestic economy has had no impact on Blenheim's aggressive stance on acquisitions, with 21 completed last year alone. The spending continues with the purchase of Paris-based Gramac for £11.36 million, announced yesterday.

Acquisitions accounted for the lion's share of a 122 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £21.3 million for the year to end-August, ahead of City expectations, lifting earnings by 54 per cent to 58.3p a share. But this has overshadowed organic growth of almost 20 per cent.

Blenheim's quick-spending days may be coming to an end, and not before time. Its shares have fallen from an unrealistic £10.20 to 700p this year, making it clear that the City no longer has an appetite for its paper. Borrowings have reached £16 million and although the interest bill is covered seven times, the company is devoting more management time to creating a leaner organisation.

With profits of £26.5 million likely this year, the shares trade on a prospective p/e of 10.7 and are fairly valued.

Global springboard for B Gas

The £565 million purchase of Consumers' Gas Company of Toronto by British Gas, now approved by Canadian regulatory authorities, is the biggest step yet by British Gas towards becoming a global energy utility.

Since privatisation in 1986, British Gas has spent £2.5 billion on acquisitions. These have been in oil and gas exploration. That is no accident. George Langshaw, British Gas's managing director, global gas, pointed out: "Gas utilities are very important in people's lives. Governments of all shades are loathe to lose control of them."

British Gas won approval in Canada to buy Consumers, the country's fourth biggest utility with a million customers, only after it demonstrated benefits to the company it was acquiring, its commitment to investment and ecologically-sound management, and to customer service standards.

Expanding the distribution end of the business is thus much more difficult than

snapping up exploration and production interests, but for British Gas investors, it is in many ways more attractive. The distribution business is the utility part of its activities. Its earnings are strong and dependable. Exploration and production are high-risk affairs with uncertain rewards.

The company earns the majority of its revenues from distribution in Britain. Gas consumption is still rising. In 1989, British Gas added another 350,000 customers to its 18 million-strong customer base. Robert Evans, the chairman, said continued growth at that rate over the next five years would leave very few more homes to be connected.

Meanwhile, a series of rulings from Ofgas, the regulatory body for the gas industry, has left British Gas vulnerable to growing competition in the provision of supplies to large industrial customers.

Competitors are expected to pick up a significant slice of new bulk business supplying the coming generation of gas-fired power stations. They have already secured several

contracts, and may find it relatively easy to "cherry pick" British Gas's most attractive industrial customers.

In its search for expansion, British Gas was, therefore, being pushed into a higher-risk strategy. Mr Evans expects profits from exploration and production to equal the present level of profits from the supply business by the end of the decade. Adding supply assets enables him to build up the exploration side even more, without unbalancing the risk ratio of the business.

As in Britain, Canadians use gas mainly for heating their homes and cooking. Eighty-nine per cent of Consumers' customers are households. Last year, Consumers added an extra 45,000 customers.

Deregulation has changed the way Canadian utilities obtain gas. Consumers is now able to buy its supplies from producers on the west coast and pay pipeline operators to pump them 3,000 kilometres.

With the purchase of Consumers, British Gas also gains an important technical base.

Consumers has converted the engines of its road vehicles to natural gas. Its research into gas injection technology, and fuel storage tanks is among the most advanced in the world.

There is also scope for the use of gas in Canadian power generation. Demand is projected to rise, but nuclear generation is no longer seen as an attractive option. New combined cycle gas turbines, potentially offering a very large gas demand, have a much higher thermal efficiency than coal- or oil-fired plants.

Mr Evans believes British Gas has more to offer Consumers than financial muscle; British Gas is a world leader in gas distribution technology. Mr Evans says it can help Consumers reach customers beyond the distance from the mains which distribution companies would normally consider. In turn, Consumers should provide a springboard for selling British Gas technology in North America.

ROSS TIEMAN
Industrial Correspondent

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Alexander's battle cry

LONDON will remain the most important financial centre in Europe and is the best choice for foreign companies seeking a base there. Such is the view of Lord Alexander of Weedon, chairman of National Westminster Bank and past chairman of the Takeover Panel, who has thrown his full weight behind London's importance to the international community. He travels to Bangkok this weekend to address business leaders on behalf of British Invisibles - the former British Invisible Exports Council - before repeating the message in Jakarta a week later. "London is a marvellous financial centre and has a very able skills base," says Lord Alexander, aged 54, who will be joined by Robin Fox, vice-chairman of Kleinwort Benson, and a distinguished delegation from the Square Mile, including Lord Camoys, deputy chairman of BZW and Anthony Leachman, vice-chairman of SO Warburg. "If we handle London properly, we can keep it as the dominant financial centre of entry into Europe so far." Once his business in Thailand and Indonesia is complete, he travels to Singapore and Tokyo, accompanied by Tom Frost, group chief executive of NatWest, before returning via Moscow in two weeks. "I have never been there, although my wife has, and I am very keen to not only

to see the art treasures but to meet bankers who have visited us in London," he adds.

Food for thought

AS MARKS and Spencer puts the finishing touches to its new Moorgate food hall, due to open in the spring, a group of bullion dealers at Sharps Pixley have opened a book of suitable contents. Pork Belies would be a favourite with fund managers, known for their copious girths, while Frozen Assets would be suitable for Asil Nadir. Platinum Sponge - the dealer's term for grain - may grace the table of Sir Michael Edwards of Minorco, while Tiny Rowland, chief executive of Lomro, could develop a taste for Gold Blend. Humble Pie would be a must for the analysts who tipped Polly Peck as share of the year and last, but not least, would be a Basket of Currencies, bought off the shelf, and with a handle each for Sir

Geoffrey Howe and Margaret Thatcher.

Playing the game

THE changes sweeping eastern Europe have inspired McKenna & Co, the London solicitor, to scale new heights in its search for business. Not only is the firm encouraging its staff to take holidays in the region, but it is also doing its best to promote sporting links. Members of McKenna's lacrosse team returned this week from a tour of Czechoslovakia, where the firm is registering an office. But Dick Shadbolt, head of the East European desk, who has visited the area on several occasions, was not among them. The team won half their games - despite discovering at the last minute that the Czechs play three different versions of lacrosse - and trips to Hungary and Poland may follow.

Royal joker

PRINCE Edward joins a host of distinguished guests at London's Strand Theatre on Sunday night for a glittering charity revue featuring some of the City's most talented artists. Taking centre stage behind a white grand piano is Philip Lambert, better known as North Sea analyst on Kleinwort Benson's top rated oil desk. "With talk of recession and bad times just around the corner, we decided it would be a good idea to cheer people up a bit," says Lambert, aged 29, who tried his hand as an actor-composer before turning to the square

mile. "My career ground to a halt after I played piano for Sir Ralph Halpern during a modelling session at the Savoy Hotel, and none of the models would speak to me." Nearly 1,000 guests are due to attend the show, *You Must Be Joking - Yet Again*, which is in aid of the Anastasia Trust, a charity for deaf children founded by the late Lord Annaly and his wife Beverley, and a second show follows next weekend.

CIA loads the dice

A PAIR of paper dice that explode in your face is the latest trick to be used by direct mail firms in their quest for new business. The first company to use the ploy is the CIA - not the American secret service, but the Credit Insurance Association. The dice, spring-loaded with elastic bands, fly out of an envelope to reveal proposals like: "You're a compulsive gambler and you really need that surge of adrenalin you get from risking your company, your job, your house and your Porsche 928S to get through the day." With statements like that, terrified readers are almost certain to reach for the telephone and dial the CIA. "Many people say credit insurance is boring," says Bryan Squibb, the marketing director, who admits that the company name has attracted its fair share of comments. "We decided not to put a company plaque outside our offices in Grosvenor Place, since people might get the wrong idea," he adds.

JON ASHWORTH

A SIMPLE WAY INTO EUROTUNNEL

TELEPHONE SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

The Eurotunnel Rights Issue is now underway. If you wish to acquire new Eurotunnel shares, you could do so simply by telephoning the Eurotunnel ShareLink Service* on 0922 745 745. This service is open from 8.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. on weekdays until 26th November. The commission charged for each transaction, including handling all documentation for you, will be £10. Existing shareholders could use this service to acquire new shares in addition to their entitlement under the Rights Issue. Alternatively you could buy new shares through your stockbroker, bank or other intermediary.

NEW TRAVEL PRIVILEGES

Depending on the level of your investment, starting with a minimum of 45 new shares, you may obtain new Eurotunnel Travel Privileges. If you wish, you may nominate another individual to have these privileges instead of you. Full details of the new Travel Privileges are contained in the prospectus.

Investment in the Eurotunnel Rights Issue should be made only on the basis of information contained in the prospectus. If you do not have a prospectus, telephone the Eurotunnel Share Information Line on 0800 300 393.



EUROTUNNEL SHARELINK*
0922 745 745

* Until 4.00 p.m. on 26 November. * This service will be provided by ShareLink Limited. ShareLink is an execution-only stockbroker and does not provide financial advice. It is a member of The Stock Exchange and The Securities Association. Investment in Eurotunnel involves a significant degree of risk. The value of shares and rights to subscribe for shares can go down as well as up. If you are considering investing in Eurotunnel, it is recommended that you consult an appropriate professional adviser. Issued by Eurotunnel P.L.C. and Eurotunnel S.A. and approved by Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited, a member of The Securities Association, for the purpose of section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986.



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1993 High Low Company		Price Bid Offer	Open Change day p	Vol p	YTD %
288	288	288	7.0	32	31
289	289	289	1.0	37	31
290	290	290	1.0	41	31
291	291	291	1.0	44	31
292	292	292	1.0	47	31
293	293	293	1.0	50	31
294	294	294	1.0	53	31
295	295	295	1.0	56	31
296	296	296	1.0	59	31
297	297	297	1.0	62	31
298	298	298	1.0	65	31
299	299	299	1.0	68	31
300	300	300	1.0	71	31
301	301	301	1.0	74	31
302	302	302	1.0	77	31
303	303	303	1.0	80	31
304	304	304	1.0	83	31
305	305	305	1.0	86	31
306	306	306	1.0	89	31
307	307	307	1.0	92	31
308	308	308	1.0	95	31
309	309	309	1.0	98	31
310	310	310	1.0	101	31
311	311	311	1.0	104	31
312	312	312	1.0	107	31
313	313	313	1.0	110	31
314	314	314	1.0	113	31
315	315	315	1.0	116	31
316	316	316	1.0	119	31
317	317	317	1.0	122	31
318	318	318	1.0	125	31
319	319	319	1.0	128	31
320	320	320	1.0	131	31
321	321	321	1.0	134	31
322	322	322	1.0	137	31
323	323	323	1.0	140	31
324	324	324	1.0	143	31
325	325	325	1.0	146	31
326	326	326	1.0	149	31
327	327	327	1.0	152	31
328	328	328	1.0	155	31
329	329	329	1.0	158	31
330	330	330	1.0	161	31
331	331	331	1.0	164	31
332	332	332	1.0	167	31
333	333	333	1.0	170	31
334	334	334	1.0	173	31
335	335	335	1.0	176	31
336	336	336	1.0	179	31
337	337	337	1.0	182	31
338	338	338	1.0	185	31
339	339	339	1.0	188	31
340	340	340	1.0	191	31
341	341	341	1.0	194	31
342	342	342	1.0	197	31
343	343	343	1.0	200	31
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345	345	345	1.0	206	31
346	346	346	1.0	209	31
347	347	347	1.0	212	31
348	348	348	1.0	215	31
349	349	349	1.0	218	31
350	350	350	1.0	221	31
351	351	351	1.0	224	31
352	352	352	1.0	227	31
353	353	353	1.0	230	31
354	354	354	1.0	233	31
355	355	355	1.0	236	31
356	356	356	1.0	239	31
357	357	357	1.0	242	31
358	358	358	1.0	245	31
359	359	359	1.0	248	31
360	360	360	1.0	251	31
361	361	361	1.0	254	31
362	362	362	1.0	257	31
363	363	363	1.0	260	31
364	364	364	1.0	263	31
365	365	365	1.		

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LONDON FOX				LONDON METAL EXCHANGE			
through the Products	COCOA	AMT Futures		Official prices/volume provided by Commodity Institute of London	Retail Value		
	Dec 81	587 780-782		(\$/tonne)	Cash	3 months	Vol
	Mar 82	587 780-782					
	Mar 74-75	587 740-741		Copper Gtd A	1381.5-1382.0	1327.5-1328.0	603826
	Mar 76-77	587 740-741		Lead	369.0-369.5	371.0-371.5	50025
	Mar 78-79	587 740-741		Zinc	1282.0-1282.5	1280.0-1280.5	121825
	Mar 80-81	587 740-741		Zinc Spec H ¹	6180.0-6181.0	6180.0-6181.0	6578
	Mar 82-83	587 740-741		Aluminum H ¹	1635.0-1635.5	1635.0-1635.5	325050
	Mar 84-85	587 740-741		Nickel ¹	8550.0-8550.5	8450.0-8500.0	12192
	Mar 86-87	587 740-741		(\$/cents per Troy oz. (\$ per tonne))			
	Mar 88-89	587 740-741					
	Mar 90-91	587 740-741					
	Mar 92-93	587 740-741					
	Mar 94-95	587 740-741					
	Mar 96-97	587 740-741					
	Mar 98-99	587 740-741					
	Mar 00-01	587 740-741					
	Mar 02-03	587 740-741					
	Mar 04-05	587 740-741					
	Mar 06-07	587 740-741					
	Mar 08-09	587 740-741					
	Mar 10-11	587 740-741					
	Mar 12-13	587 740-741					
	Mar 14-15	587 740-741					
	Mar 16-17	587 740-741					
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	Mar 20-21	587 740-741					
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	Mar 70-71	587 740-741					
	Mar 72-73	587 740-741					
	Mar 74-75	587 740-741					
	Mar 76-77	587 740-741					
	Mar 78-79	587 740-741					
	Mar 80-81	587 740-741					
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TOKYO

GrandMet rises as hopes grow of pub swap backing

The graph displays two data series over a 12-month period from November to October. The left Y-axis represents the 'Share price' in dollars, ranging from \$0 to \$100. The right Y-axis represents the 'FTA All-share Index (Rebased)', ranging from 350 to 800. Both series show a significant downward trend, with the share price falling from approximately \$95 to \$35 and the index falling from 750 to 400. A central image of a unicorn is overlaid on the graph, with the text 'WELCOME FALLING SHORT OF EXPECTATIONS' below it.

Month	Share price (\$)	FTA All-share Index (Rebased)
Nov	95	750
Dec	90	720
Jan	85	680
Feb	80	650
Mar	75	620
Apr	70	580
May	65	550
Jun	60	520
Jul	55	480
Aug	50	450
Sep	45	420
Oct	35	400

Source: Datastream

There was little sign of a halt to the slide in Eurotunnel's share price, as investors showed a pessimistic attitude. The company's full-year profits fell by 10% to £133 million, and its pre-tax profits fell by 15% to £133 million. The group has reported an extraordinary dividend of £83.9 million relating to the withdrawal from its property development interests. The final dividend has been cut to 10p.

Interim figures from F&L, demerged from Babcock International this year, showed pre-tax profits tumbling from £46.8 million to £26.3 million.

MICHAEL CLARK

MAJOR CHANGES		MAJOR INDICES	
RISES:			
Caterpillar	361p (+10p)	New York:	
Grand Met	570 1/2p (+15p)	Dow Jones	2550.99 (-8.66)
SA Breweries	560p (+22p)	S&P Composite	318.16 (-2.24)
		Tokyo:	

END OF

M & W Plo	74	Utd Uniform	113
Malaysia Capital	25½	Unichem	120
Midland Radio	89	Wig Tpe App	160
Mtn Investors	175		
Paramount	53	RIGHTS ISSUES	
Procter/Gilf	35	Caution N/P	½
Reliance Corp	80-1	Credon N/P	½
Process Int'l	143	Eurochem Pack N/P	75-½
Sharia Healthcare	65	Prop Test N/P	½
Shaw-Jones	81-4	Propriet N/P	½
Smaller Int'l	130	Unichem N/P	25
Sund Platform	82	Vivat N/P	½
Ty Euro Growth			
Utd Energy		(Issue price in brackets)	

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	550	14	26	-	75	85	-	Jan	85	-	37	-	140	-

November 15, 1990	Total: 25482 Calls 15182 Puts 10270	FT-SE: Calls 2298 Puts 3064
	*Underlying security price.	

First Dealings	Last Dealings	Last Declaration	For Settlement
November 12	November 23	February 21	March 4

All options were taken out on: 15/11/80 Amstrad, Davy Corp, Eurotunnel Units,
 remainder Cons, H Young, Tuskar Res.
 Note: Amstrad, Reuters.

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Once the malting is over, the barley wash becomes part of the

island's natural food chain. Serving as a nutritious food for the

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102 103 104 105 106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113 114 115 116 117 118 119 120 121 122 123 124 125 126 127 128 129 130 131 132 133 134 135 136 137 138 139 140 141 142 143 144 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159 160 161 162 163 164 165 166 167 168 169 170 171 172 173 174 175 176 177 178 179 180 181 182 183 184 185 186 187 188 189 190 191 192 193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200 201 202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212 213 214 215 216 217 218 219 220 221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233 234 235 236 237 238 239 240 241 242 243 244 245 246 247 248 249 250 251 252 253 254 255 256 257 258 259 260 261 262 263 264 265 266 267 268 269 270 271 272 273 274 275 276 277 278 279 280 281 282 283 284 285 286 287 288 289 290 291 292 293 294 295 296 297 298 299 300 301 302 303 304 305 306 307 308 309 310 311 312 313 314 315 316 317 318 319 320 321 322 323 324 325 326 327 328 329 330 331 332 333 334 335 336 337 338 339 340 341 342 343 344 345 346 347 348 349 350 351 352 353 354 355 356 357 358 359 360 361 362 363 364 365 366 367 368 369 370 371 372 373 374 375 376 377 378 379 380 381 382 383 384 385 386 387 388 389 390 391 392 393 394 395 396 397 398 399 400 401 402 403 404 405 406 407 408 409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420 421 422 423 424 425 426 427 428 429 430 431 432 433 434 435 436 437 438 439 440 441 442 443 444 445 446 447 448 449 450 451 452 453 454 455 456 457 458 459 460 461 462 463 464 465 466 467 468 469 470 471 472 473 474 475 476 477 478 479 480 481 482 483 484 485 486 487 488 489 490 491 492 493 494 495 496 497 498 499 500 501 502 503 504 505 506 507 508 509 510 511 512 513 514 515 516 517 518 519 520 521 522 523 524 525 526 527 528 529 530 531 532 533 534 535 536 537 538 539 540 541 542 543 544 545 546 547 548 549 550 551 552 553 554 555 556 557 558 559 560 561 562 563 564 565 566 567 568 569 570 571 572 573 574 575 576 577 578 579 580 581 582 583 584 585 586 587 588 589 590 591 592 593 594 595 596 597 598 599 600 601 602 603 604 605 606 607 608 609 610 611 612 613 614 615 616 617 618 619 620 621 622 623 624 625 626 627 628 629 630 631 632 633 634 635 636 637 638 639 640 641 642 643 644 645 646 647 648 649 650 651 652 653 654 655 656 657 658 659 660 661 662 663 664 665 666 667 668 669 670 671 672 673 674 675 676 677 678 679 680 681 682 683 684 685 686 687 688 689 690 691 692 693 694 695 696 697 698 699 700 701 702 703 704 705 706 707 708 709 710 711 712 713 714 715 716 717 718 719 720 721 722 723 724 725 726 727 728 729 730 731 732 733 734 735 736 737 738 739 740 741 742 743 744 745 746 747 748 749 750 751 752 753 754 755 756 757 758 759 760 761 762 763 764 765 766 767 768 769 770 771 772 773 774 775 776 777 778 779 780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790 791 792 793 794 795 796 797 798 799 800 801 802 803 804 805 806 807 808 809 810 811 812 813 814 815 816 817 818 819 820 821 822 823 824 825 826 827 828 829 830 831 832 833 834 835 836 837 838 839 840 841 842 843 844 845 846 847 848 849 850 851 852 853 854 855 856 857 858 859 860 861 862 863 864 865 866 867 868 869 870 871 872 873 874 875 876 877 878 879 880 881 882 883 884 885 886 887 888 889 890 891 892 893 894 895 896 897 898 899 900 901 902 903 904 905 906 907 908 909 910 911 912 913 914 915 916 917 918 919 920 921 922 923 924 925 926 927 928 929 930 931 932 933 934 935 936 937 938 939 940 941 942 943 944 945 946 947 948 949 950 951 952 953 954 955 956 957 958 959 960 961 962 963 964 965 966 967 968 969 970 971 972 973 974 975 976 977 978 979 980 981 982 983 984 985 986 987 988 989 990 991 992 993 994 995 996 997 998 999 1000 1001 1002 1003 1004 1005 1006 1007 1008 1009 1010 1011 1012 1013 1014 1015 1016 1017 1018 1019 1020 1021 1022 1023 1024 1025 1026 1027 1028 1029 1030 1031 1032 1033 1034 1035 1036 1037 1038 1039 104

Modest recovery

Prices recorded are at market close. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Where one price is quoted, it is a middle price. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices. (as) denotes Alpha Stocks. (VOLUMES: PAGE 28).

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● Ex dividend a Ex all b Forecast dividend c Interim
payment passed f Price in suspension g Dividend and
yield exclude a special payment h Pre-merger figures i
Forecast earnings o Ex other r Ex rights s Ex schp c
share split t Tax-free .. No significant data.

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Waverers braced for a weekend of canvassing and consulting



Stanbrook: every MP has made up his mind

By SHEILA GUNN
POLITICAL REPORTER

CONSERVATIVE MPs not signed up publicly or covertly to Margaret Thatcher or Michael Heseltine by now will spend a weekend of canvassing, consulting and mulling over their fate under the leadership of either contestant.

There is much talk among the "waverers" about listening to the views of local activists, but they are likely to be influenced as much by the strange ballet being performed by the key players over the next four days.

Many of the "don't knows" are "won't tells", with a band of Heseltine supporters suspected of keeping quiet because of demands from their constituency

officials to back Mrs Thatcher. To muddy the waters even further some MPs admit privately to hedging their bets by promising undying loyalty to both camps. Behind the cover of a secret ballot, the number of Tory MPs who will claim next Wednesday to have picked the winner is expected greatly to exceed the number that voted.

After Sir Geoffrey Howe's appeal in his Commons speech for a European vision for the "young people of today", echoed by many elderly Conservative peers, MPs report greater backing among their younger constituents for Michael Heseltine than from older party workers.

During the past few days MPs have relied mostly on telephone

calls from their agents to gauge the reaction in their constituencies to the leadership challenge. This weekend gives them the chance to widen their canvassing and to tap constituents' views before making a final decision.

Robert Rhodes James, who is standing down as MP for Cambridge at the next election, said yesterday: "I will talk to my officers and my successor Mark Bishop. On Saturday morning I will talk to real people, walking around the market place, popping into the odd pub and I will ring up certain people whose opinions I value."

Ivor Stanbrook, MP for Orpington, said: "In my opinion every MP has made up his mind

but they feel inhibited by their constituency associations. I prepared the ground by speaking to the officers of my association and finding to my pleasant surprise that at least they are sympathetic to my views that it's time for a change."

Neil Thorne, MP for Ilford South, said he was looking for a change of style by Mrs Thatcher. "I have been very loyal to the prime minister since I worked as her personal assistant in 1974," he said. "My interpretation is that the general public are looking for a change of style, not necessarily a change of leader. If that is correct I believe there is no reason why she would not be able to carry on. I am looking myself for a change of style." He also

thought that the perpetual pursuit of reforms that caused political indigestion was a result of Mrs Thatcher's fear that she would be accused of running out of steam after more than 11 years in office.

Mr Thorne added: "The prime minister has also made the mistake of not elevating people to the peerage when they have completed their usefulness as ministers. So on her backbenches there are a large number of people who are discontented and a large number of wives who think their husbands have been cheated out of high office."

"After 11 years it must be very difficult to maintain popularity among people whom she has had to displace."



Rhodes James: will talk to "real people"

Heseltine camp hits back over claims of 5p tax increase

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

MICHAEL Heseltine and his supporters hit back yesterday at claims by the Thatcher camp that his proposals on poll tax would mean increases in income tax of up to 5p in the pound.

Mr Heseltine's supporters said yesterday that it was totally wrong to talk about 5p tax increases, and accused the prime minister's supporters of using "phony figures". In a speech in Scotland yesterday Mr Heseltine said that the poll tax on its own was capable of losing the election for the Conservative party. It was a matter of the cabinet changing its priorities.

Michael Forsyth, the Scottish minister, in a letter to his constituency chairman, quoted a speech by Mr Heseltine only two years ago in which he criticised the idea of shifting expenditure from local authorities to central government and said the commensurate savings in local authority expenditure were never made. That, Mr Forsyth said, was an example of why he would be voting for Mrs Thatcher's consistent approach.

The arguments over poll tax and what can be done to reform it have become the centrepiece of Mr Heseltine's campaign to persuade

Tory MPs that he has the best chance of leading them to election victory, and ministers have set out to undermine his efforts.

At prime minister's question time on Tuesday, Teddy Taylor, a Conservative backbencher, used the 5p figure. Mrs Thatcher agreed it would mean a "huge increase" in income tax.

Mr Heseltine yesterday criticised people who sought to "cloud the issue" by talking about tax increases which he had no intention of bringing about. Pointedly saying he had consulted the Commons library, the authority quoted in the Commons by Mr Taylor for his figures, he said on BBC Radio 4's *World at One* programme: "The amount of money that is raised locally by the poll tax is something in the order of £14 billion. Something like 40 per cent represents education costs."

"If you were to move part of that or all of that to the central exchequer away from the community charge, it would reduce the community charge by something like 40 per cent." He added: "Of course the money would have to come over a period of time from growth in the economy."

John Major, the Chancellor,

had recently announced public spending of about £200 billion a year and predicted a growth in the economy of about 2 per cent a year, providing about £4 billion a year of extra real-term resources.

The Heseltine camp said Mr Heseltine's scheme for poll tax reform, which he would put to the cabinet to consider, was based on one put to Mrs Thatcher's cabinet by Sir Keith Joseph in 1982. It involved the state taking over 75 per cent of educational spending, with tight restrictions on local authorities' ability to spend the money on anything else. The ultimate goal would be to move towards what Mrs Thatcher herself sought, more specialisation by opted-out schools.

As for the finance required, there would be a saving of the £4 billion being poured into concessions and rebates on the poll tax, quite apart from what could be spared from economic growth.

John MacGregor, the leader of the Commons, said there was nothing new in Mr Heseltine's proposal. Both he and Mr Major insisted that if education expenditure was taken off the community charge then either taxes would have to be increased or there would be less to spend on health, law and order and defence.

Mr MacGregor said that with the tax increase option "the danger is that you will simply increase the combined burden on the tax and community charge payers". He added: "Experience suggests that local authorities would not reduce their community charge by the same amounts as would be financed from central taxation but would surreptitiously increase their own spending."

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They seek him here, they seek him there

By KERRY GILL

ON THE second day of his visit to Scotland, the would-be leader of the Conservative party proved to be unusually coy. Panic spread early among the press corps when no sighting was made of Michael Heseltine.

Even Cecil Parkinson, the transport secretary, who arrived in windswept Glasgow yesterday to declare his support for Mrs Thatcher, was asked where the former defence secretary was. He said he had no idea. By lunchtime a horde of pressmen were subjected to furious demands from their news editors, but still nobody knew exactly where he was.

It is believed that Mr Heseltine left the city's Holiday Inn and dashed to a secret rendezvous at an Edinburgh restaurant. Here, it is said, he assessed his support among Scottish MPs with at least one local newspaper editor in attendance.

Shortly after 3.30pm Mr Heseltine surfaced in the Victorian Lanark Memorial Hall to address a rally in support of Carol Goodman, the local Tory candidate. To the reporters' disgust, it was mostly the same old stuff about Scotland's rosy future under another Conservative government. There wasn't even the diversion of the heckling seen at Paisley the previous evening, just polite applause from the solid Tory countryfolk.

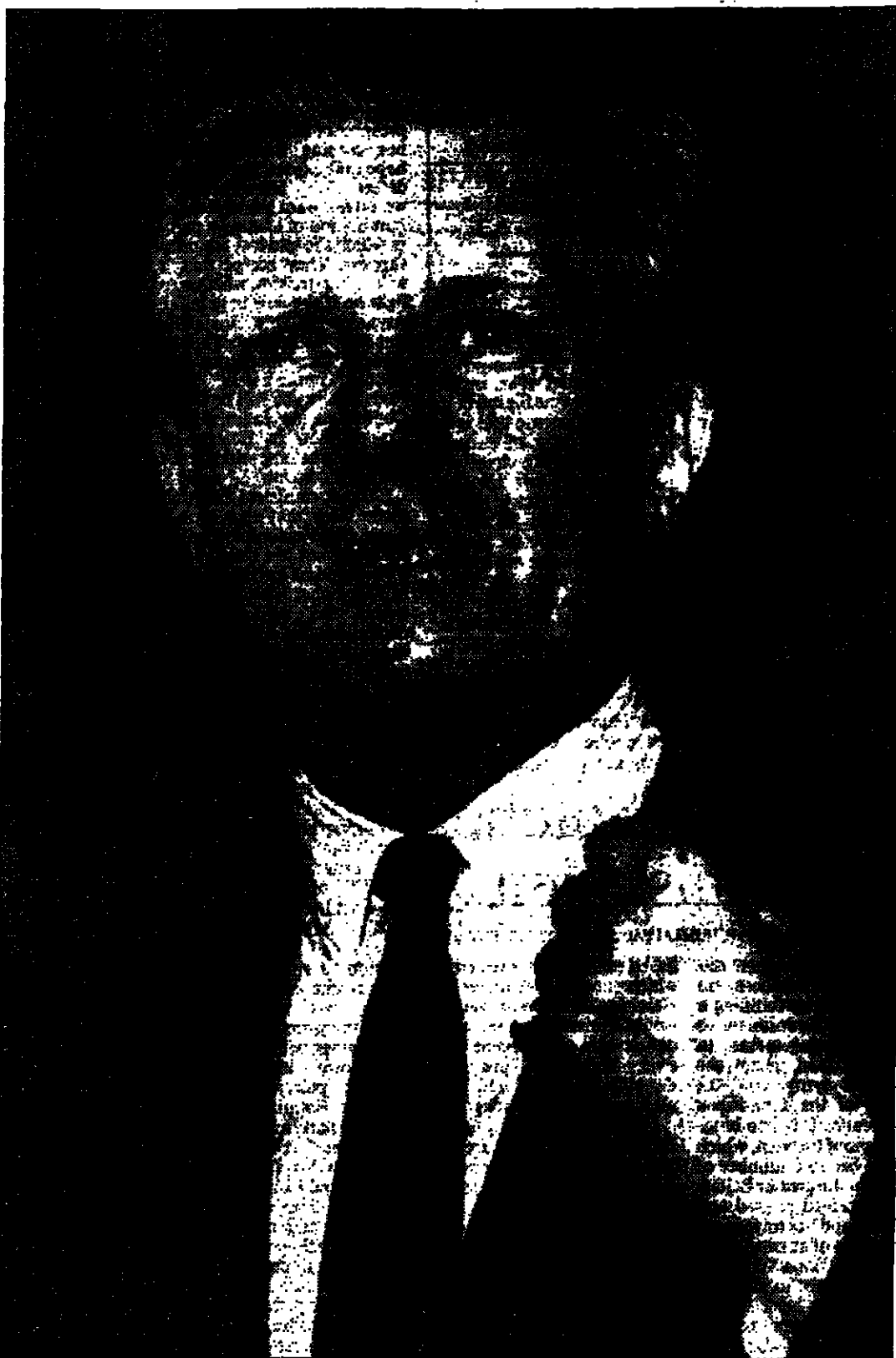
Most of the 200 people looked

on in shock when the hall doors were finally opened to allow in the cameramen. It was, said one "utterly unbelievable". Mr Heseltine dived on with what appeared to be his set speech for the Scots. The chairman of the meeting then called for questions and Mr Heseltine took the opportunity to drop his latest sweetener, a drop in income tax. The press sighed with relief, checked their notes, asked if Mr Heseltine would now announce a pension increase.

In this most bizarre of leadership election campaigns the proceedings were halted to allow a raffle to take place. Mr Heseltine said he was glad that the press had all been bludgeoned into buying raffle tickets, but at least they could claim the cost back on expenses.

Mr Parkinson, who had ostensibly travelled to Scotland to support the Tory candidate in the Paisley by-elections, immediately dismissed The Times/Mori poll showing that a win by Michael Heseltine would give the Tories a ten-point lead.

"The poll had no real relevance at all," he said. Tory MPs would not be "bounced" by it. "We have a very successful leader who has made history. She was the first woman leader, the first woman prime minister of Britain and the first Conservative leader to be elected three times. She is highly regarded throughout the world."



Mr Heseltine in Lanark yesterday, where he criticised people who sought to "cloud the issue"

Americans slow to realise something's up

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

FOR 11 turbulent years Margaret Thatcher has been America's most stalwart ally. At the risk of being called the White House poodle, she has nurtured and cherished the "special relationship" above all others. After the bombing of Libya, during the invasions of Grenada and Panama, and now in the Gulf her public support for Washington has never wavered. The most remarkable aspect of US reaction to her present predicament, however, is how little alarm there is.

Asked what Mrs Thatcher's departure would mean for Anglo-American relations, one senior administration official replied earlier this week: "Nobody is reckoning it's a real possibility. We never

underestimate Mrs Thatcher ... We are not rushing out and drafting contingency papers."

In the United States at large, Mrs Thatcher still enjoys almost Churchillian status and the idea of her being removed from power is almost inconceivable. But even in Washington, said Brad Roberts, editor of *Washington Quarterly*, "there's an underlying complacency that this is not a serious threat to her."

By yesterday the administration was finally beginning to realise that the Iron Lady was not, in fact, invincible. Another official admitted: "It's taken quite a while for the realisation to set in that there's something going on." Michael Heseltine is portrayed in Ameri-

can papers as a dashing, ambitious millionaire with a taste for the flamboyant gesture, but there is nothing he has said or done which sets alarm bells ringing here. What is starting to concern officials is the possible loss of Mrs Thatcher at the height of the Gulf emergency.

President Bush, somewhat distant in his early relations with the prime minister, has come to depend heavily on her support since the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, and her stock with him has never been higher. Although Mr Heseltine has promised no change in Britain's Gulf policy, the administration would not expect the same robust and outspoken rhetoric. Her loss at this time would be

"distressing", one official said. "Mrs Thatcher's unqualified and strong support and leadership in response to the Gulf crisis would be a major factor in any evaluation of her current situation," another said.

Beyond that, many independent experts believe Mr Heseltine's ascendancy would actually remove a source of increasing friction between Washington and London, which is Mrs Thatcher's hostility to closer European integration. Jacquelyn Davis, executive vice-president at the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, said: "She's making a grave mistake on the European Community and in her attitude to European integration."

Peers believe contest damaging

Lord St John of Fawley, formerly the Conservative MP for Chelmsford, Norman St John-Stevens, yesterday dismissed the leadership contest as a constitutional monstrosity.

Most Tory peers have distanced themselves from the contest although their general view will be reported on Monday to the executive of the 1922 committee. Lords sources predicted yesterday that backbench peers broadly support the status quo and believe the contest is damaging.

Lord St John said: "No parallel exists in our history: the attempt to remove by non-parliamentary means a reigning Prime Minister in full possession of her physical and mental strength who has no intention of resigning."

Saatchi verdict

A television advertising expert yesterday gave Michael Heseltine the edge for Tuesday's election. Hugh Limpe, head of corporate communications at Saatchi & Saatchi, which in the past has helped Mrs Thatcher to election victory, believes that Mr Heseltine could win on the strength of his television appearances. Ken MacKinnon, principal lecturer in media studies at North London Polytechnic, also believes that Mr Heseltine has public appeal.

MPs say Times poll will affect contest dramatically

By ROBIN OAKLEY

MPs AGREED yesterday that the Mori poll carried in all but the earliest editions of *The Times* could have a crucial impact on the leadership election.

Wavering Tories struck by its findings, which imply that the Conservatives could regain the lead in national opinion polls by choosing Michael Heseltine as leader of the party, will await anxiously confirmation from other surveys this weekend. Cabinet ministers seeking to rally support for Margaret Thatcher, however, dismissed the poll as unreliable in the fevered atmosphere of the leadership election.

The Mori poll, conducted on Thursday after nominations for the leadership battle closed, involved face-to-face interviews with 1,088 people, of whom 915 expressed a voting intention. The researchers found that 45 per cent of respondents would vote for Labour if Mrs Thatcher remained Tory leader, 41 per cent would vote for the Conservatives, 10 per cent for the Liberal Democrats, and 2 per cent for the Nationalists and for the Greens.

This was remarkable enough, showing a fall of 12 percentage points in the Labour lead since a previous Mori poll in the middle of last month. The finding that is

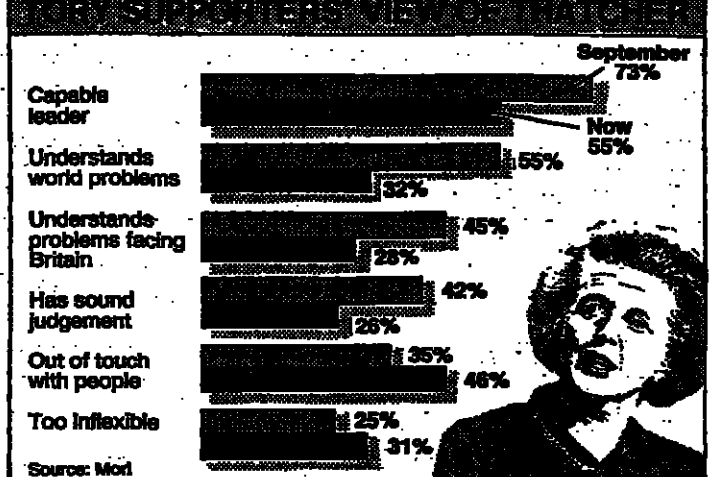
crucial to the leadership battle, however, was the polling intentions of respondents if Mr Heseltine led the party. Forty-nine per cent would vote for the Conservatives, 39 per cent for Labour, 7 per cent for the Liberal Democrats, 2 per cent for the Nationalists and 2 per cent for the Greens.

The poll found that that voting intention with Mrs Thatcher as leader of the party was Labour 45%, Conservatives 41%, Liberal Democrats 10%, Nationalists 2% and Greens 2%.

In other words, a 4 per cent Labour lead would be turned into a 10 per cent Conservative lead, the first for many months.

The findings put Conservative leaders in a quandary. Although they welcomed the idea that the Labour lead could have been slashed so dramatically, they could not afford to give credence to a survey that suggested Mr Heseltine was a far more potent vote-winner for the party than Mrs Thatcher.

While some Conservatives argued that the poll showed that the party had pulled round under Mrs Thatcher and was closing the gap on Labour thanks to her efforts, this was not borne out by the survey's other findings about the relative perceptions of her and Mr



Heseltine. As the accompanying graphic shows, Mrs Thatcher is less well regarded, even among Conservative supporters, on six key questions than she was in September.

Privately, the prime minister's supporters confessed their shock at the findings. Publicly, they sought to diminish their impact. David Waddington, the home secretary, said he was not sure if the new poll was reliable and that it needed to be treated with caution.

"It would be very nice if we were in the lead, but it's a very small sample," he said on the BBC's *Breakfast News*. "It would be a turn-round from all the recent polls."

Mr Waddington said that the suggested popularity of Michael Heseltine ignored Mrs Thatcher's strong leadership qualities.

Kenneth Baker, the Conservative party chairman, said he was "a little suspicious" of the poll findings. After considering the

predicted narrowing of the gap between the parties, however, he said: "I must say it is the best poll figure I have seen, the shortest lead I have seen, since I became chairman of the party."

Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, said: "The poll only shows how the public can change its mind overnight and simply reflects the excitement surrounding the leadership election." He claimed that the poll was not an accurate indicator of public opinion, but did add that he was pleased to see that Mrs Thatcher was only a few points behind Mr Kinnock, one of her best performances in months.

The Heseltine camp was being very careful not to crow. Mr Heseltine would not comment, but Dr Keith Hampson, one of his campaign managers, said: "It was a dramatic poll. It highlights what the campaign is all about, and that is winnability."

Robert Worcester, chairman of Mori, defended his firm's poll against the home secretary's criticism: "I am not certain of Mr Waddington's qualifications to criticise sampling design," he said. "I remember that he and his colleagues pointed with some pride to our survey on election day in 1987, when we suggested the Tories would be in government with a majority of just over 100."

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